

Durness Primary School

2009

Contents

Admission Arrangements.....	16
Art and Design.....	8
Assessment and Reporting.....	12
Attainment 5-14.....	18
Attendance.....	13
Attendance Rates.....	19-21
Budgeted Running Costs.....	19-21
Child Protection.....	18
Contact - Home/School	15
Curriculum.....	5
Data Protection	18
Discipline.....	14
Drama.....	9
Educational Aims	4
Environmental Studies.....	10
Expressive Arts	8
First Day at School.....	16
French.....	6
Gaelic.....	7
Getting to School.....	13
Health Care.....	15
Homework.....	12
Information, Communication and Technology...	7
Introduction.....	2
Language.....	6
Mathematics.....	7
Meals.....	13
Music.....	8
Nursery.....	13
Out of School Activities	17
Outdoor Education	9
Parental Responsibilities.....	17
Personal and Social Development.....	16
Physical Education.....	9
Playground	14
Religious and Moral Education.....	11
School Parent Council.....	18
School Fund.....	21
Secondary School.....	16
Special Educational Needs.....	12
Staff.....	3
Term Dates.....	3
Times.....	3
Uniform.....	15



The school from the 'hill'



The school car park and entrance

Welcome

Welcome to Durness Primary School! Although your first impression may be that we are a fairly modern institution, parts of the building date from about 1840 when the Church of Scotland provided funds for the construction of a new school. The previous school stood on the shores of Loch Croispol below the former Balnakeil Manse and the now ruined building dates from 1768. This too was a replacement building for an even earlier school, for the first recorded educational establishment was opened in 1712. There were other schools in the parish as well. Ceannabeinne, now a holiday cottage was built in 1828, again as a replacement for a school established in the late 18th century and, to serve the eastern part of the parish, a school was opened at Eriboll about 1780. Gradually with the decline of population and the shifts in settlement caused by the notorious clearances in the early 19th century and economic plight in the middle of the 20th century, all education in the parish became centred on this, the Durine school. Originally offering, until the 1940's, secondary education as well as primary, this building has grown and changed over the years. In 1958 it was considerably extended in an abortive attempt to provide junior secondary education. This left ample accommodation for a two teacher school with three classrooms and a large multi-purpose room as well as an extensive playground and a playing field.

It is not surprising then, that a school with such a long history is held in high regard in the community and we do our best to ensure the tradition of excellence is maintained. You are now becoming part of that tradition as your child enters this school. We hope a close partnership between home a school, a lively, interesting curriculum and with the provision of a safe, happy environment, your child will, by the end of his or her time with us, be well equipped to face the challenges of the future.

The following pages tell you something about the way the school is run, but the best way to find out is to come along and see us as a warm welcome awaits you at all times.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Bruce

Headteacher.



The old Parish School at Loch Croispol

Address Durness Primary School
 Durine
 Durness
 Laing
 Sutherland
 IV27 4PN

e-mail Graham.Bruce@highland.gov.uk

website <http://www.durness.org> (for general information on Durness)

Telephone 01971 511237

Staff`

Head Teacher (P4-7)	Mr Graham Bruce
Assistant Teacher (P1-3)	Mrs Margaret MacRae
Specialist Teachers	
Art	Mrs Nicola Poole
Physical Education	Miss MacNeil
Music/	Mrs Gail Ross
Learning Support	Mrs Gail Ross
Teacher of the Deaf	Mrs Carol Moss
Management Relief	Ms Katy Lee
Chanter Instructor	Mr Sandy Wregg
Clerical Assistant	Mrs Caroline McCowan
Classroom Assistant	Mrs Caroline McCowan
Learning Support Auxiliary	Mrs Sally Edwards
School Cook	Mrs June Dean
School Cleaner	Miss Carlie Aspen
School Chaplain	Rev John Mann (Church of Scotland)

School Times

8.40am	School Opens
9.00	Classes Begin
10.30-10.50	Interval
12.15-1.00pm	Lunch
2.35	End of Day P1-3
3.05	End of Senior Day

Term Dates 2009-2010

Autumn Term	Tuesday 18 th August - Friday 9 th October
Winter Term	Thursday 29 th October - Wednesday 23 rd December
Spring Term	Monday 11 th January - Friday 26 th March
Summer Term	Monday 12 th April - Friday 2 nd July

Long Weekend Friday 12th February - 17th February inclusive.

School Roll as at 1st January 2009 **25** (P1-3 12, P4-7 13)

School Aims

The broad aim of this school is to make children feel confident in their abilities and valued as an individual both within the school and the wider community. More specifically we aim to raise standards across the curriculum, but especially in language and mathematics.

In the subject areas, which are taught in an accessible and challenging way to all pupils, we aim to:

- **Language** - develop skills and knowledge so a pupil can understand English to the best of his or her ability and to support the pupil's personal development through Language and Literacy
- **Mathematics** - provide the skills required for the understanding and confident use of mathematical processes and applications
- **Expressive Arts** - develop a child's self expression through the enjoyment of participation in the wide range of challenging skills, ideas and techniques found in music, art, drama and physical education.
- **Environmental Studies** - have pupils achieve a broad knowledge and understanding of the environment through the acquisition of appropriate skills so they can develop positive attitudes towards it.
- **Religious and Moral** - help pupils know about and understand the place of religion in our society and to develop positive beliefs, attitudes and moral values.
- **Personal and Social Development** - motivate children to feel responsibility and regard for the school and the wider community and to develop confidence, self-esteem, ambition and self-discipline.

We also endeavour to:

- make pupils, parents and staff feel welcomed, safe and valued as individuals
- work closely with parents for the benefit of the pupils
- develop professionalism, planning and teamwork among staff
- develop an environment where quality is valued.



The Playhouse and the lower playground

The Curriculum

We offer a broad, but balanced curriculum which is based upon the national 5-14 Guidelines. This sets out what children should learn from Primary One to Secondary Two. It is made up of experiences and activities necessary for a child's development. In the primary school there are six main areas:-

Language: *English and French*

Mathematics

Environmental Studies: *Science, Social Subjects, Technology*

Expressive Arts: *Art, Drama, Music, Physical Education*

Religious and Moral Education

Health

These have been divided into Attainment Outcomes, each with a number of Strands. Most Strands have an Attainment Target at different Levels. For example in Language the Outcomes are:

Listening, Talking, Reading and Writing

An example of a Strand in Listening is:

Listening to others in groups

And an attainment target at Level B is:

Listen to others in a group or one to one activities and respond making a relevant comment.

Class work is then structured to achieve this target.

This framework applies to all the main areas.

The six levels of progression are:

Level A: *should be attainable in the course of P1-3 by almost all pupils.*

Level B: *should be attainable by some pupils in P3 or even earlier, but certainly by most in P4.*

Level C: *should be attainable in the course of P4-6 by most pupils.*

Level D: *should be attainable by some pupils in P5-P6 or even earlier, but certainly by most pupils in P7.*

Level E: *should be attainable by some pupils in P7-S1, but certainly by most in S2.*

Level F: *should be attainable in part by some pupils, and completed by a few pupils, in the course of P7-S2.*



The Senior Class at work

Language

Language is the basic tool of all learning and has an essential role across the curriculum. It allows children to communicate effectively with others, to examine their own and others experiences, feelings, and ideas and is central to childrens' intellectual, emotional and social development.

There are three broad aims to English Language. The school will try to:

develop skills and knowledge so a pupil can understand English to the best of his or her ability;

support pupils' personal development through language and literature;

develop in all pupils a range of positive attitudes towards their own and others language development.

To achieve this the language curriculum is broken into four main areas:

Listening, Talking, Reading, Writing

Examples of attainment targets and levels are given in appendix 1. The curriculum is delivered through a variety of teaching styles and approaches designed to maximise the potential of the individual child. The school has been involved in the Early Intervention Programme, a national scheme to increase attainment in reading and writing with the stress being on the early acquisition of skills from P1. Children are encouraged from the earliest stages to be aware of audience and purpose in writing, to value presentation of work and the need to write neatly, use grammar correctly and to spell accurately. This is backed up through the use of home/school packs so parents can be aware that through the setting of common standards between home and school, pupil attainment can be increased. Talking and listening skills are also closely linked with the writing process as well as being encouraged through class and group discussions. Reading is directly related to what pupils write and pupils are encouraged to read to others what they have written. Reading is encouraged and developed both by the use a structured scheme in the infants and by reading for enjoyment. A wide variety of reading and resource materials are available in the school as are word processing, data banks and language software. Both classrooms have extensive libraries and the library van visits fortnightly. The school also runs a book club to encourage children to build up their own collection of books.

French

French is taught in the senior classroom. Much of the work is concentrated on everyday language such as greetings, weather, family, pets and so on. There is a lot of emphasis on the spoken word, but by P7 children are expected to be able to write basic statements (e.g. "Je m'appelle...") and construct simple stories. Much of the work is carried out through a theme, e.g. My Home, reinforced by games, worksheets, songs.



Busy children in the infant room

Gaelic

Gaelic is taught on an informal basis to help raise awareness of the cultural background of this area. Basic greetings, weather and place names are taught or discussed as well as learning some songs. The school occasionally enters a choir in the provincial Mod.

Information and Communication Technology

The school is committed to providing quality in teaching and learning for all through effective use of ITC. To this end children have access to eight PC's and two laptops. Both classrooms have access to the Internet and e-mail facilities. A code of conduct for operation of the Internet is in place and parents and pupils are required to both sign and adhere to it. All children use computers when appropriate to the learning situation which includes word processing, web searching and the use of commercial programmes. The school also has a digital camera, a digital video camera, a Smart Board, a digital projector and a scanner. All children have an opportunity to use some of this equipment at some point during a session.

Maths

There are four broad aims in maths:-

To understand the nature and purpose of maths

To acquire skills in mathematical thinking

To develop confidence in using and applying maths

To learn to enjoy its challenges and aesthetic satisfactions

In other words - to teach children facts and skills so that they can understand them and apply them in a relevant way.

As in language Maths is broken down into four main areas:-

Problem Solving and Enquiry

Information Handling

Number, Money and Measurement

Shape, Position and Movement

Problem Solving skills are very difficult to define, so there are only broad outlines laid down on how to achieve this. However the other three areas are the concepts, facts and techniques of maths and progression is made through the levels of attainment. Examples are given in appendix 1.

Children come to school with an experience of maths although they often do not realise it. Their play with handling objects, enjoying pattern and sorting and sharing are the foundation on which the school builds. From these early beginnings pupils have to learn the skills required to work with problems and enquiries involving maths. These are structured round pure mathematics or real life situations, either actual everyday problems or imaginary ones. Throughout the curriculum opportunity is found to involve maths, but most work is done in either class or group lessons. Emphasis is placed on mental skills as a prerequisite to increased attainment in maths and daily practise is given. Various methods of calculation are taught both mental and written and pupils are encouraged to realise which is the most suitable to use. Calculators are used when appropriate throughout the school and widen the range of calculations a pupil can do. However they do not substitute the development of mental or written processes or provide unnecessary support. Computers are used to provide a stimulating context for maths through a range of software, particularly in number skills and information handling.

Expressive Arts

The expressive arts fall into four areas:-

Art and design
Drama
Music
Physical Education



The tiles at the front door

While there are many aims covering this subject they can be best summed up by being:-
to develop a child's self-expression through the attainment of a wide range of skills, ideas and techniques for the betterment of the child as an individual and his relationships with others.

Art and design

This has its basis in an infants attempt to make sense of his or her surroundings by the simplest drawings and model making. Gradually, through a whole range of experiences, skills and techniques are built up which lead to better expression of feelings and ideas and an appreciation of own and others work. To gain this a wide range of mediums are used:- paint, crayon, pencil, ink, charcoal, clay, plasticine, fabric and much more. These are used in such activities as painting, drawing, screen-printing, batik, pottery, sewing, knitting, appliqué, modelling, photography and so on. When appropriate, field trips are made.

The school is fortunate in having the skills of an art specialist who visits the school fortnightly and works in conjunction with the class teacher. Artwork is constantly on display in the school and an example of pottery work can be seen at the entrance to the school in the tiles depicting world environment. More pottery and stone carvings can be seen at the Village Hall Garden. A further example is the appliqué wallhangings referred to in the environmental studies section.

Music

The school aims to realise the full musical potential of a child through offering a wide range of activities such as music making, singing and listening, and the acquisition of musical skills and knowledge.

Through individual, group and class tuition, children are encouraged to play a range of percussion instruments, keyboard, recorder and in some cases piano and guitar. A wide range of songs, both unison and harmony are sung. Musical notation is taught, mainly through recorder playing. Appreciation of music is encouraged through listening to a variety of styles and composers. Pupils are encouraged to explore the world of music making and to write their own notation.

The expertise of a music teacher is drawn on weekly when the visiting specialist comes and works in conjunction with the class teacher. Chanter instruction is available as an option, usually from P5. The instructor comes weekly. This normally leads on to bagpipe playing in secondary school.

Drama

Most children come to school with a lot of experience of imaginative role-playing through which they explore aspects of the world and the people they meet. We build on this early play with the aim of allowing children to express themselves confidently through acting to help them understand and react positively to different situations and to develop a range of dramatic skills and techniques. Much of drama is linked with language skills, particularly talking and listening.

Beside mime, role-play and dramatic reading, the school stages a major drama event every Christmas. For most of this century the school has performed a play or musical at the Christmas Treat (village party) in the village hall. This varies from a straightforward nativity to traditional pantomime. Consequently we have built up a considerable wardrobe of props and costumes.

Physical Education

In PE Children gain knowledge and understanding of the role of exercise in good health, develop a positive attitude to an active lifestyle and a concern for their physical well being. This is achieved through a wide range of skills through a number of activities: -

Games and team sports- football, unihoc, badminton, table tennis, basketball, golf;
Dance, including Scottish country dancing;

Gymnastics;

Athletics;

Swimming.

Bettyhill is the nearest pool (40 miles). Despite the distance, all children have a block of eight lessons each year. All children, both boys and girls, participate in all aspects of PE. Most PE lessons take place in the village hall, which is situated about a mile from the school to which transport is provided. Outdoor activities take place on the school playing field. The major sporting event of the year is the Northwest Schools Sports, held in May, either in Durness, Scourie or Kinlochbervie. We participate in a number of events both local and at a county level throughout the year as well as award schemes in swimming, gymnastics and athletics. Despite being a small school we have had some notable sporting success in the past few years, having had the county individual champion in golf and badminton, had a pupil running at national level in cross-country, have had boys in the county football team and have been holders of the Sutherland Rural Schools' Athletics trophy.

Outdoor Education

The school, through voluntary help, maintains an isolated cottage at Arnaboll on the shores of Loch Hope in the eastern part of Durness Parish. This is used for a number of activities principally by the senior class, including a weekend camping and a winter weekend for a small group, usually P6/7, where the main activity is cooking and indoor pursuits.

The school works closely with the local Countryside Ranger who is involved in various outdoor activities and in the maintenance of the school garden.



Campfire Circle, Arnaboll

Environmental Studies

Broadly speaking this is how children learn from, learn about and respond to the environment. This does not just refer to our local environment, but extends outward to include the global environment both past and present.

Although it is a very wide subject a central aim can be identified:-

Through experiences provided and organised for the purpose, pupils should achieve knowledge and understanding of the environment, develop positive attitudes to it and learn skills which will enable them to interact effectively with it.

To this end Environmental Studies is broken into four areas of knowledge and understanding and two of skills developed across these areas.

Science in the Environment

Place, Time and Society

Health and Safe Living

Living with Technology

Investigating Designing and Making

In plainer language:- History, Geography, Science and Social Studies plus skills and knowledge gained in mathematics and language. As in other curricular areas children progress through the levels A to E.

Details of Attainment Targets can be had on request.

To ensure all the areas are covered the school operates a program of projects designed to stop repetition of topics from one year to the next, but flexible enough to respond to current events. Both the local and Scottish environment play key roles and visits within Durness and further afield are important parts of a study. An appreciation of our own locality is essential in the understanding of man's influence on the environment.

Science, while an important part of some projects, is taught through a progressive scheme of work. Technology also tends to form a subject on its own as does Health.

In 1990, the school was involved along with many other schools throughout the country, in a major local studies project. The outcome of this was three magnificent appliqué wallhangings now hanging in the Durness Visitor's Centre. They have also been exhibited in Glasgow, Milton Keynes and twice in London.

We maintain productive flower and vegetable gardens in the school grounds as well as a tree nursery. This has led to the gradual improvement of the amenity round the school.

All senior pupils have the chance to experience a trip away for several days fieldwork.

Trips in recent years have included Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. Pupils should also experience a weekend camping in our own area at Arnaboll.



Taking part in an archaeological dig

Religious and Moral Education

This deals with self-awareness, relationships, values and above all, beliefs.

The aims are to help pupils to: -

know about and understand Christianity and other world religions and

appreciate moral values

to think about themselves and to develop their own beliefs, attitudes and moral values

find out and try to understand the questions and answers that religion can offer about the nature and meaning of life.

To help achieve this the subject is broken into three areas: -

Christianity

Other World Religions

Personal Search (moral issues, etc.)

Much of this is done through class discussion, reading and interpreting bible stories, singing religious songs, visits by the school chaplain and the weekly school assembly, which is an act of Christian worship. This is further reinforced by the attitudes of staff, parents, and in the day to day running of the school. Parents do, however, have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons.

Personal and Social Development

This is not so much a subject as an aspect of education which influences a child right across the curriculum. Although closely linked to religious and moral education, a different set of aims can be stated. They are to help pupils to: -

think about their own and societies' values and how they affect thoughts and actions;

take increasing responsibility for their own lives;

have a positive regard for others and their own lives;

to be able to participate effectively in society.

Personal development is essentially concerned with self-awareness and self-esteem. Social development is concerned with inter-personal relationships, independence and inter-dependence.

How this is achieved is a blend of creating the right sort of positive atmosphere within the school and by careful planning and delivery of the curriculum. There are times when topic work will focus in on this subject, such as 'Ourselves' and several of the units in our health programme deal with relationships and decision making.



Orienteering with the North Coast Schools

Homework

Homework is valuable for lots of reasons including increasing achievement, practising skills gained in the classroom, allowing the use of resources and materials not found in school and it involves you directly in your child's learning.

Homework is issued on a regular basis and usually takes the form of a homework pack. In it will be found the homework for that week and will include reading, maths and language as well as aspects of other curricular areas such as environmental studies and expressive arts.

Homework is for the child's benefit and gives the parent a clear idea of what his or her child's abilities and interests are. It is important that good study habits are formed such as working at a table and not having the TV on. To foster positive attitudes towards homework, the parent should be involved as much as possible and more than just insisting the work should be done. Homework should be corrected before it comes to school and neatness should be insisted upon. If this is not done your child will get a confused signal - doing things correctly is for school, not for life outside school.

Homework should not be made stressful. Occasionally there may be an aspect of homework that causes confusion. If there is, it should be referred to the class teacher and not cause any undue worry.

Special Educational Needs and Learning Support

Should a pupil be recorded as having SEN both the curriculum and teaching approach will be structured to integrate the child as fully as possible into the daily life of the school. Appropriate support in terms of auxiliary help and learning support will be given when required.

The school currently has a learning support teacher for one day a week as well as a classroom assistant for two hours a day in P1-3. Much of this time is for general support among all children, either for working in problem areas in maths and language or for encouraging higher levels of achievement among more able pupils. The LS teacher can also work with groups of children on social behaviour. Should a child need any special help consultation will be had with the parents before any formal steps are taken.

Assessment and Reporting

All pupils are assessed continually, i.e. the teacher is always monitoring the child's progress and comparing it with his or her potential ability and to the levels of attainment laid down in Education 5-14. Individual records are kept in Maths, English Language and Expressive Arts as to regards Levels of Attainment and through planning in other curricular areas staff are aware of the levels achieved by individuals. Self and peer assessment also play their part and pupils are aware of teacher assessment through written and verbal comments and discussion on individual and class or group strengths and weaknesses. National Testing is carried out in Maths, Reading and Writing when a teacher's own assessment indicates a pupil is working securely at a level of attainment and is ready to progress to another.

Reports, which give comment on progress, levels of attainment in the main curricular areas and attitude towards school, homework and behaviour, are issued twice a year in November and June. The November report is a brief one. The June report includes teacher's comments on general progress and behaviour, next steps in learning and how you can help at home. There is also a comment sheet which gives you an opportunity to make written observations on the report. An open afternoon and evening follows shortly after the reports are issued when they can be discussed with staff.

School Meals

School Meals are provided by Highland Catering and Cleaning Contract Services and are cooked on the premises. They currently cost £1.65 and money for the week should be paid to the cook on a Monday morning. Children choose from menus issued in advance and these include vegetarian options. Children are encouraged to try all meals and to leave an empty plate. Menus are varied and conform to a healthy diet. Yoghurt and fruit are available as an alternative to a hot pudding.

Should your child wish to have a packed lunch, a table is available in the dining room. Regulations governing packed lunches can be had on request. Pupils are eligible for free school meals if their parents are in receipt of Income Support. Forms of application are available in the school. Issue and return of these forms is confidential as is the number and names of those receiving free school meals.

Getting to School

Transport is provided according to statutory requirements. Pupils aged eight living more than two miles, or more than three miles if over eight, from the school by the shortest route available are entitled to transport. However, children from Druim Bhlair have gained exemption from this on road safety grounds.

If there are spare seats on the bus these will be made available to children not entitled to transport and who live on the route. Pupils are expected to wait patiently for the bus and to behave in an orderly fashion when on it.

Children walking from Balnakeil and Durine should cross the main road in the vicinity of the telephone box, not at the school car park entrance. Entry to the school grounds should be by the West End or School Road gate rather than through the car park.

Transport is not available for P1-3 at 2.35pm. Children who cannot be collected have a variety of play activities to occupy them until 3.05pm.

Advice on travelling to school in adverse weather is issued at the onset of each winter.

Attendance

Regular attendance is a must for success at school for obvious reasons. If your child is absent, please phone or send a written message before 9am. If we do not hear from you by 10am, we will contact you. Should it become apparent your child is to be off for several days, please let us know as it helps with class planning.

Shopping trips or family holidays taken during school time will be marked as unauthorised as will any unexplained absence.

Nursery

Nursery education is provided by the Care and Learning Alliance. They are commissioned by Highland Council to make provision for three and four year olds. The nursery meets in a dedicated, recently refurbished room in the school every morning Monday to Friday, 9 to 11.30am. For further information please contact the nursery leader, Mrs Selena Campbell, 511793, (home) or at 511237, (school).



The Nursery ready for action

Discipline

The school's policy on discipline is aimed at generating a secure, friendly atmosphere with an effective and safe learning environment. This is achieved through a variety of means from teaching styles, constructive relationships between staff and pupils, the structure of the curriculum and adherence to the 'Golden Rules' philosophy of encouraging positive behaviour.

Children are expected to behave at all times with good manners and follow the common sense school rules. When needed sanctions are verbal reprimand, following a course of positive behaviour rewards, detention during interval and withdrawal of privileges. In extreme cases suspension would be considered.

The school has an anti-bullying policy that is issued to parents at the time of enrolment. Parents will be informed and their support welcomed in cases of protracted or severe in discipline.

Dealing with behavioural incidents

When a child reports an incident in the playground or the classroom or a member of staff observes bad behaviour, the following explains what normally happens:

The incident is investigated by a teacher and appropriate action is taken - this may be a discussion on the rules of a game or how to cope with other children when playing or working, the use of positive behaviour awards, it may be that a child requires punishment such a verbal reprimand, the withdrawal of privileges, loss of playtime or 'Golden Time'. If it is a serious incident, or it becomes apparent there is a string of minor complaints from the same child or about the same child it will be recorded and action taken. This may include contacting the parents of the children involved, providing support for the those children in the way of counselling and in extreme cases bringing into the school support workers from other agencies such as Health and Social Services.

Should a child feel they cannot tell a teacher, an auxiliary member of staff has been designated as a point of contact, there is a playground book for writing about incidents in the playground and there is a Pupil Council box for leaving messages in.

When a parent reports an incident it will be investigated, action taken and the result reported back to the parent. This will also be logged.

The Playground

We are fortunate in Durness to have a large and exciting playground that is divided up into three distinct areas:

The lower playground contains both hard and grass surfaces, the school garden, a garden shed, trees, shrubs, a bird feeding station, the playhouse and sandpit, a picnic bench, basketball stand and game grids painted on the hard surface;

The hill which is an open area of steep ground with rock outcrops, rough unkempt grass and immature trees and a small area of hard surface in front of the door and staffroom window with more game grids;

The playingfield or park which is a flat open area of grass and includes a small football pitch, four swings, a wooden climbing frame with a small chute, a rope tepee climbing frame, a small roundabout and a rocking bike. It also has three raised beds for growing vegetables and a fenced off wild garden area including a pond, an area which the children are not allowed to access unsupervised.

The playing field is accessed by crossing School Road, a minor through road with very little traffic. There is a recognised crossing point with barriers and good visibility as well as appropriate warning signs for drivers. Children are instructed in the Green Cross Code and are expected to cross the road responsibly as there is no crossing supervision.

P1-3 wear hi-viz vests when they go to the playing field. If you would rather your child did not cross the road this can be indicated at the time of enrolment and reviewed as your child progresses through the school.

In common with all schools in Highland with less than 50 pupils, there is no playground supervisor working in the playground. Children have at all playtimes full access to the school where at least one member of staff is always available to deal with any incident in the playground. For any minor incident they can seek help or assistance from one of the Buddies who are normally drawn from P6 and P7 pupils. Children are also allowed to go to the toilet during playtimes although they are encouraged to go before or immediately after playtime.

Snacks are available from the kitchen at morning playtime and these are taken in the school dining room. In good weather children are expected to play outside. If the weather is indifferent they have a choice of staying in the classroom or going out. In these conditions the hill and the playingfield are out of bounds and, normally, play will be on the hard surfaces only. When the weather is bad the children remain inside and have a number of wet weather activities that they do.

School Uniform

We have a school uniform that consists of a bottle green sweatshirt and a white polo shirt both with the DPS puffin motif. A fleece jacket is an optional extra. They are priced £7.50, £7 and £13 respectively. These items can be ordered from the school. Along with this pupils are expected to wear black, dark grey or navy blue trousers or skirts. Footwear should be dark, self-coloured shoes or trainers. In wet weather children should change out of wellingtons or boots into suitable indoor footwear. All footwear and clothing should be clearly marked with your child's name. Earrings, if they must be worn, should be studs only.

Gym kit is T-shirt, shorts, socks, gym shoes and, for outdoor activities, a track suit. This can be kept in a bag in school and taken home periodically for washing. Children are expected to change fully for PE.

Contact between Home and School

The school runs a very open policy on contact between parents and teachers and you are welcome to come along at any time to discuss your child's progress. Indeed you are welcome to come and have a look round just to see what is going on. There are two open afternoon/evenings a year when you can come to school with your child to see his/her work and discuss it with the staff. Should you require a more formal contact, an appointment can be made. If we have any concerns, we will get in touch with you. Parents are also encouraged to help when specialised skills are required in connection with project work, e.g. craft skills and for transport and supervision on outings. Newsletters, which are issued fairly frequently, keep you up to date with events, dates, schoolwork, changes or reminders to school policy, etc.

Health Care

We are a Health Promoting School achieved through various means ranging from offering a varied, healthy diet at lunchtime, healthy playtime snacks, promoting personal hygiene and teeth cleaning to creating a progressive attitude and environment in which pupils can learn positively about themselves and their life style.

Parents are encouraged to make sure their children have adequate sleep and arrive clean and tidy. Regular checking for head lice is a parental responsibility. The school has

regular visits from the school dentist and doctor. Parents are entitled to attend such examinations if they so wish. The dental hygienist visits at least once a term. The Speech Therapist visits when the need arises.

Admission Arrangements

Dates for enrolling children in P1, usually in February, are posted in the press and in the nursery. Parents wishing to enrol a child in the school should do so on the given date. They will be issued with guidance regarding placement of a child in a school, the choice of school and information regarding this school. Parents of prospective pupils are welcome to view the school at any mutually convenient time.

First Day at School

Hopefully your child will have attended on a regular basis the nursery run by Highland Pre-School Services held within the school building. He or she will be familiar to some extent with the school building, the toilets, other pupils and staff and will have most of the skills necessary for attending school. He or she will also have visited the infant classroom on several occasions and met the various members of staff. This means that the first day of school should not have any fears of the unknown.

Any worries you may have about how well your child will settle into school should be discussed with the staff beforehand. To help your child have a smooth, trouble free start, study the following section and pass on the appropriate information.

Does the Teacher Know?

- Her ability, interests, fears, like and dislikes?
- Can he tie his shoelaces?
- Will she ask to go to the toilet?
- Must he be encouraged to eat his lunch?
- Are there foods she will not eat?
- Are there any health or social problems?

This is the type of information we would like to know, but if there is anything else we should know about, please tell us.



Outside the Infant Room

Receiver Secondary School: Kinlochbervie High School

A brand new secondary school opened in Kinlochbervie, 18 miles south of Durness in 1995. This ended the need to travel to Golspie in East Sutherland and stay in hostels during the week. It gained full six-year status in session 1999/00.

Close liaison has been built upon between the feeder primary schools and the High School ensuring a smooth transition between P7 and S1.

Details regarding the school can be had from the rector:

Dr. Ian Smith
Kinlochbervie High School
Manse Road Kinlochbervie Lairg, Sutherland.
01971 521767 ian.smith@highland.gov.uk

The school's brochure is published in January each year.

Parental Assistance and Support

Parents have many responsibilities, but the following could be summed up as those directly linked to school.

1 - *to show by their example that they support the school in striving for a high standard in all that it does.*

2 - *to ensure that their children come to school regularly, on time, refreshed, alert and correctly dressed for work.*

3 - *to take an active and supportive interest in their children's work and progress.*

4 - *to support the authority and discipline of the school, helping their children to achieve maturity, self-discipline and self-control.*

5 - *to control the development of their children's leisure time.*

In practical pursuit of the above, parents could:

- *spend time talking to their children, discussing homework and schoolwork, emphasising their commitment to education*
- *encourage their children to read*
- *promote good home study habits: find a place away from TV, use a work surface not the floor, concentrate and try not to daydream*
- *provide materials to stimulate interest - books and magazines, paint, paper, musical instruments, construction toys*
- *develop their children's practical skills - shopping, counting change, writing letters, making telephone calls, helping at household chores*
- *encourage their children to join local clubs and take part in local events*
- *encourage their children to come to school prepared*

Out of School Activities

Although not run by the school, the following activities for children are fully supported by the school. For further details please contact the organisers.

Junior Badminton Club - meets October to April	Caroline McCowan 511341
Junior Golf Club - coaching and tournaments May - October	Lucy MacKay 511364
Junior Football October - April	Tony Jackson 511737
Junior Youth Club (P4 - 7) October - April	Marjory Morrison 511204
The Yogi Club (P1-3) October - April	Susan Rees 511394

A range of one off activities occur during the year from story telling to clowning skills and varies from year to year. Flute, violin and bagpipe tuition are also available locally. Both the local fishing and gun clubs have formed junior sections.

Parent Council and Forum

The Parent Council and Forum was formed in 2007 following the introduction of Government legislation to replace Parent Teacher Associations and School Boards. Broadly speaking the Forum replaced the PTA and the Council the School Board. In reality they will both operate as one unless there are issues whereby the nominated members of the Council will deal with the situation. Co-opted members from the wider community and members of the school staff also serve on the Council.

Office Bearers: Mrs Frances Arrowsmith *chairperson*, School Road 511767;
Mrs Jackie Hird, *secretary*, Fashven, Durine 511223
Mrs Frances Morrison, *treasurer*, Orcadia, Lerin 511336

Parents will be notified of Council meetings and minutes, correspondence and other information pertaining to the Council is available in the School. This is stored along with other parental information on the shelf at the car park entrance.

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 must report such incidents to Social Work Services which can lead to a joint Social Work/Police investigation.

All agencies involved in Child Protection are obliged to make the welfare of children their paramount consideration and this will be the priority for Education Service staff.

More information about Child Protection Procedures within Highland can be obtained from the *Child Protection Development Officer, Mrs Susan MacLaren, Highland Child Protection Committee, Kinmylies Building, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NN - Telephone (01463) 703483- Fax (01463 71323)*

Data Protection

Any information you supply or any information gathered from or about your child will be used only for the purpose for which it was provided and any relevant procedures following from this. This data will be maintained in accordance with the Data protection Act and will not be passed onto any other organisation without your prior approval unless this is a legal requirement.



The achievement wall in the corridor

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS 2008 PRIMARY SCHOOLS

School: Durness Primary School	Id No.: 270 - 5108020
---------------------------------------	------------------------------

Budgeted Running Costs For Financial Year 2008-2009

School Roll at September 2007	20
Total School Running Costs at April 2008 (£)	143,467
Cost per Pupil (£)	7,173

Attendance And Absence For School Year 2007/2008

	Stage								
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P1-7	
Total Number of Possible Attendances(Pupil Half Days)	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	7,216
Percentage Authorised Absences	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	3.0
Percentage Unauthorised Absences	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	0.3

Minimising Overall Absence

	Absence recorded (2006/2007) Average number of half days absence per pupil	Absence recorded (2007/2008) Average number of half days absence per pupil
Absence	19.1	12.7

Where schools have 9 openings per week, please note that all local authority and national figures are based on 10 openings per week, and so are not directly comparable.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS 2008 PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Education Authority: Highland

Budgeted Running Costs For Financial Year 2008-2009

School Roll at September 2007	17,029
Total School Running Costs at April 2008 (£)	60,594,613
Cost per Pupil (£)	3,558

Attendance And Absence For School Year 2007/2008

	Stage							
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P1-7
Total Number of Possible Attendances(Pupil Half Days)	823,218	879,569	901,186	901,018	1,019,376	986,524	958,200	6,469,091
Percentage Authorised Absences	4.6	4.2	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.1	4.0
Percentage Unauthorised Absences	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5

Minimising Overall Absence

	Absence recorded (2006/2007) Average number of half days absence per pupil	Absence recorded (2007/2008) Average number of half days absence per pupil
Absence	17.1	17.1

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS 2008 PRIMARY SCHOOLS

National Data

Budgeted Running Costs For Financial Year 2008-2009

School Roll at September 2007	372,265
Total School Running Costs at April 2008 (£)	1,352,956,701
Cost per Pupil (£)	3,634

Attendance And Absence For School Year 2007/2008

	Stage							
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P1-7
Total Number of Possible Attendances(Pupil Half Days)	18,444,479	19,145,177	19,526,465	19,941,323	20,669,987	21,017,565	21,092,362	139,837,358
Percentage Authorised Absences	4.3	4.1	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.9
Percentage Unauthorised Absences	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Minimising Overall Absence

	Absence recorded (2006/2007) Average number of half days absence per pupil	Absence recorded (2007/2008) Average number of half days absence per pupil
Absence	18.0	18.6