



# **Durness Primary School** **2022-2023**

Information for Parents

## **Covid 19 Pandemic**

The ongoing pandemic continues to affect the normal running of schools in many ways.

This Handbook reflects the way the school *usually* runs but does not cover all of the changes that we have made because of the pandemic.

Our arrangements have changed in many ways since March 2020, and may well change again, depending on how the pandemic develops.

For the most up-to-date information about any aspect of the work of the school, please make contact and we will be able to tell you about our current arrangements.

For the latest information about how the pandemic affects children, young people and families across Scotland, please visit the Scottish Government website, which has helpful information [about Coronavirus and its impact on education and children](#).

# Welcome

*Welcome to Durness Primary School. Durness is situated in the north west of the Scottish mainland. Durness is made up of several townships and the main areas of employment here are tourism, local services, fish farming and crofting.*



*We are fortunate to live amongst some of the most beautiful scenery in the country and the children at the school have this as a backdrop to their education. We have the outdoor classroom on our doorstep and make full use of this to enhance the children's learning experiences.*

*The school has two classrooms, a room which is currently used by our Countryside Ranger, a dining room and kitchen and is surrounded by an interesting playground with features such as climbing frames, a play house, a garden area, a rocky hill, painted games and much more. There are currently 4 pupils. The school makes much use of the local modern village hall for P.E. and any events which require a large indoor space.*

*Although Durness is a place where traditional values are very much appreciated and valued, we aim to provide an education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our school is well resourced and staff are keen to provide an education that is varied, stimulating and aims to help all the pupils achieve their best.*

*Education is a partnership between home and school, and we aim to provide a safe, happy environment which will help your child to face the challenges of the future.*

**Graeme Smart**  
**Head Teacher**

*Address:* Durness Primary School  
Durine  
Durness  
By Lairg  
Sutherland  
IV27 4PN

*Telephone:* 01971 511237

*HT Email:* [graeme.smart@highland.gov.uk](mailto:graeme.smart@highland.gov.uk)

*School e-mail:* [durness.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:durness.primary@highland.gov.uk)

**Website** [durnessprimary.wordpress.com](http://durnessprimary.wordpress.com)

**Staff**

Head Teacher	Mr Graeme Smart
Depute Head Teachers	Ms Katy Lee, Mrs Aileen MacDonald
Principal Teacher (P1-7)	Ms Angela Craggs
Support for Learning	Mrs Katie MacFarlane
Art	Mrs Nicola Poole
Chanter Instructor	Mr Cameron MacDougall
Active Schools Co-ordinator	Mr Scott MacRae
Fiddle Instructor	Ms Anne Wood
Clerical Assistant	Ms Wendy Morrison
Pupil Support Assistant	Mrs Ellen Parker, Ms Sally Czerwik
School Cook	Miss Michaela Prazakova
School Cleaner	Mrs Angela Mackinnon
School Chaplain	Rev Andrea Boyes (Church of Scotland)
Early Years Manager	Mrs Aileen MacDonald
Early Years Practitioner	Miss Klara Jancuskova
Support Worker	Mrs Kristina Coulton

## School Aims

Durness Primary is a school where we endeavour to ensure that our pupils become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

- Every child is known and treated as an individual.
- Every child is helped and encouraged to reach their full potential.
- Children's differences are accepted and celebrated.
- Staff have high expectations for their pupils.
- Staff are committed to keeping their skills and methodology in line with current best practice.
- School, parents and the wider community are viewed as partners in providing the best possible education for our pupils.



## **School Times**

### **Mon-Thurs**

9:00	Classes Begin
10:30 - 10:45	Interval
12:30 - 1:15	Lunch
2:55pm	End of Day P1-3
3:30pm	End of Day P4-7

### **Friday**

09:00	Classes Begin
10:15 - 10:30	Interval
12:15	Lunch
12:30	School Closes

Every Thursday our ASG (Durness, Scourie and Kinlochbervie Primaries and Kinlochbervie High School) all learn together, P1-6 in Kinlochbervie Primary School and P7 in Kinlochbervie High School.

## **Term Dates 2022-2023**

Autumn Term: Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> August - Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
Winter Term: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October - Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022  
Spring Term: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January - Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023  
Summer Term: Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April - Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### **Other School Closures:**

In-service Days	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
School closed	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> February and Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> 2023
In-service Day	Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2023
May Day	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2023
In-service Day	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023

**School Roll** 4 pupils (Dec 2021)

### **Admission Arrangements**

Dates for enrolling children in P1, usually in January, are posted in the press. 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 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 school on several occasions prior to starting 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, have a look at the following section and pass on the appropriate information to the school.

### **Does the Teacher Know?**

- Their ability, interests, fears, like and dislikes?
- Will they ask to go to the toilet?
- Do they need encouraged to eat their lunch?
- Are there foods they will not eat?
- Are there any health or social problems?
- Do they need help with shoelaces?

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

### **Nursery**

We were delighted to open the refurbished nursery attached to Durness Primary School in August 2020. Our nursery class is able to offer the full 1140 hours-childcare spread across the school term. Nursery hours are as follows:

Mon - Thurs 9am -3.30pm

Fri 9am -1pm

Our 3 members of staff offer a wide variety of activities for the children including lots of opportunities for outdoor learning in the school grounds and around the village. Our Care Inspectorate registration allows

for children aged from 2 years, to not yet, attending school. In some exceptional circumstances, a variation may be applied for, to allow younger children to attend. If you feel this may apply to you, please contact the Nursery Manager or Head Teacher to discuss this further. Due to our proximity with the primary school, we take every opportunity to work with the older pupils. We have weekly gardening sessions together where we grow a variety of vegetables in the school poly tunnel. The primary school pupils join us in the nursery for a variety of activities including story time.

Due to current COVID restrictions, we are unable to meet up with our partner groups in Scourie and Kinlochbervie. However, this is something we aim to do in the future so as to provide our small groups of children the opportunity of wider socialisation.

Snacks are provided mid-morning & mid-afternoon, with a hot meal being available from the school canteen at lunchtime.

The hourly rate for non-funded children currently stands at £4.40.

However, we are also registered to accept tax-free childcare payments.

Full details of enrolment procedures can be found at:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/11/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_for\\_early\\_learning\\_and\\_childcare/2](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/11/enrol_your_child_for_early_learning_and_childcare/2)

### **Receiver Secondary School: Kinlochbervie High School**

The local secondary school for pupils to attend is Kinlochbervie High School.

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 obtained from the head teacher:

**Graeme Smart**

**Kinlochbervie High School**

**Manse Road, Kinlochbervie, Lairg, Sutherland.**

**Tel:** 01971 521767 **Email:** [graeme.smart@highland.gov.uk](mailto:graeme.smart@highland.gov.uk)

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



## **Discipline**

The school's positive behaviour policy 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 SAFE 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 exclusion would be considered.

The school has an anti-bullying policy and parents will be informed, and their support welcomed.

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti\\_bullying\\_-\\_guidance\\_for\\_schools](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools)

## **Contact between Home and School**

*The ongoing pandemic has affected the way in which we are able to engage with parents. For the latest information, please contact the school.*

The school runs a very open policy on contact between parents and teachers and you are always welcome to make an appointment to come along to discuss your child's progress, and, indeed you are welcome to come and have a look round just to see what is going on. There are two appointments per year when you can come to school and meet with your child's teacher. 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. baking, craft skills and for transport and supervision on outings.

Newsletters, which are issued frequently, keep you up to date with events, dates, schoolwork, changes or reminders to school policy, etc. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if there are ever any issues that need to be discussed. Parents can phone the school and speak to the clerical assistant, teachers or the head teacher.

The school has a website which is updated regularly.

### **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. We work in partnership with a variety of health professionals including the dental health practitioner, the school nurse and doctor and the Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) Service. When required, other agencies can also be involved such as Occupational Therapy & Educational Psychologist.

### **Administration of Medicines**

Staff will only administer prescription medication when there is clear written guidance from the parents on:

The name of the medicine, the quantity of the medicine to be given, the time it has to be given.

Staff cannot administer medication which has not been prescribed by a qualified medical professional.

### **Minor injuries**

School will only deal with minor cuts and bruises, these will be cleaned and a plaster applied. If your child is injured, falls or becomes unwell during the school day you or the emergency contact you have provided, will always be contacted and you may be advised to collect your child from school.

### **Attendance/Absence**

Regular attendance is vital for your child to achieve their full potential. If a pupil is absent from school, a parent or guardian should phone the school on 01971 511237 by 9.30am. Contact can also be made by email. If it transpires your child is to be off for several days, please let us know as it helps with class planning.

If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment or any other reason, parents should contact the school with details.

If a pupil falls ill during the school day, parents are contacted to collect their child, therefore it is essential that we have up to date day time contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all pupils.

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

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

Termly attendance audits are carried out & will be available for you to see in your child's learning profile. We encourage pupils to maintain an attendance level of 90% as the very minimum.

During the current pandemic we may need to amend our approaches to recording attendance, for example if it becomes necessary for pupils to work from home. For more details, please contact the school.

### **Parent Council**

As we function as North West Sutherland Schools, we have one parent council to cover all 4 schools. Every parent is a member of this parent council & welcome to attend the meetings which take place once each term.

The current Parent Council office bearers are:

Chair : Sophie Beveridge

Vice-chair: Denise MacDonald

Secretary: Yvonne MacRae

Treasurer: Iona Shaw

Meetings are very informal and parents are welcome to attend or to contact the secretary to ask that a particular issue be on the agenda: [yvonne.macinnes@gmail.com](mailto:yvonne.macinnes@gmail.com) Individual fund raising meetings are also held in each location, giving parents an opportunity to discuss matters specific to their school.

### **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 and computers, 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 with household chores
- encourage their children to join local clubs and take part in local events
- encourage their children to come to school prepared

## Curriculum

The curriculum in Durness Primary School follows Scottish national guidelines with Curriculum for Excellence. We aim to improve our children's life chances, to nurture successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens with the young person at the centre of learning.

The eight curricular areas for all children aged 3 -18 are as follows:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Health and Well-being
4. Sciences
5. Social Studies
6. Technologies
7. Expressive Arts
8. Religious and Moral Education

The curriculum is planned and delivered ensuring that the children receive a meaningful set of experiences and entitlements that prepare them for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

All children receive personal support to help them to fulfil their potential and make the most of their opportunities. Our staff have a responsibility to look after our children's health and wellbeing - to ensure that the school is a place where children feel safe and secure.

Children have access to new technologies to support creativity and learning.

*Curriculum for Excellence* develops skills for learning, life and work to help young people go on to further study, secure work and enjoy life and leisure. It makes learning relevant and helps young people apply lessons to their life beyond the classroom. It links knowledge in one subject area to another, helping children and young people understand the world and make connections. It develops skills so that children can think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions. Every child is entitled to a broad and deep general education, whatever their level and ability. All staff will be responsible for literacy and numeracy - the language and numbers skills that unlock other subjects and are vital to everyday life.

### HMIE Report

Our most recent inspection report can be found at:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/DurnessPrimarySchoolHighland.asp>

### Standards and Quality Report and School Improvement Report

North West Sutherland's School Improvement Report & Plan (for primaries & early years) is available on our website at:

<https://durnessprimary.wordpress.com/>

This year, because of the ongoing pandemic, all schools in Highland are continuing to focus on certain key priorities as followings:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Recovery of learning teaching and assessment
3. Attainment in session 2021/22 (focusing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation)

### Getting to School

Transport is provided according to statutory requirements. Pupils aged eight or under 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 Bhlar area 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 2:55pm.

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

### School Meals

School Meals are provided by Highland Catering and Cleaning Contract Services and are cooked on the premises. Free school meals are provided for primary 1 -4.

The cost of a school meal for p 5 -7 is currently £2.30 and money for the week should be paid to the cook on a Monday morning. The children can bring along the money in an envelope or a wallet/purse and they take it along to the kitchen. Children choose from menus issued in advance. 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.

Pupils are eligible for free school meals if their parents are in receipt of Income Support. Application forms are available online by clicking the link below: [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school\\_meals](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals)

Issue and return of these forms is confidential as is the number and names of those receiving free school meals.

### School Uniform

We have a school uniform that consists of a bottle green sweatshirt or cardigan and a white polo shirt both with the DPS puffin motif. Along with this, pupils are expected to wear black, or dark trousers or skirts. Footwear should be dark, self-coloured shoes or trainers. Children should change out into suitable indoor footwear in school. All footwear and clothing should be clearly marked with your child's name. Earrings, if they must be worn, should be studs only and children are strongly discouraged from wearing chains and other jewellery which can get tangled and caught when children are playing in the playground or during P.E. lessons.

Make up and nail varnish should not be worn in school. It is very much advisable for children with long hair to have it tied back. It is more practical and helps prevent any spread of head lice.

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.

School uniform can be ordered online via:

<https://www.schoolwearmadeeasy.com>

For information on financial and application forms for help with school uniform:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools\\_-\\_grants\\_and\\_benefits/10/free\\_school\\_meals\\_and\\_assistance\\_with\\_clothing](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools_-_grants_and_benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing)

### **Assessment and Reporting**

Pupils' progress is continuously monitored and tracked in line with HC guidance. A range of assessments are used to inform this process. We use Assessment for Excellence and the Scottish Criterion for this.

Parents are invited in for an appointment with the class teacher every term to discuss progress and next steps.

There are also numerous and regular opportunities when parents are invited in to school to share the learning of pupils from P1-P7.

Pupils are always keen to take their parents or any visitors to the school on a learning walk to discuss their learning.

At the end of the year a written report and pupil profile is sent home.

### **Getting Involved**

All parents are very welcome to come along to the Parent Council meetings and can help the school by being involved in a whole variety of events and workshops. Parents are welcome to become involved by volunteering to help with clubs and out of school activities as well as classroom activities.

Useful information for parents and how to get involved in your child's education, how to support the school, information on curriculum developments can all be found at Parentzone:

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/assessment-and-achievement>

The current pandemic has affected the way in which we are able to engage with parents, and this may change further depending on how the pandemic progresses. For the latest information, please contact the school.

### **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 - Janet Cordiner - 511358

Junior Golf Club - coaching and tournaments May - October - Lucy MacKay - 511364

Durness Diggers - Ms Lee - 511237

Musical Instrument Tutors by parental arrangement.

## **The Highland Council Primary Curriculum Rationale**

### **THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES**

In constructing our curriculum we take full account of the seven principles of curriculum design identified in BtC3. These apply at all stages of learning, with different emphases at different stages. They also apply to the curriculum at a strategic level, in the classroom and in other settings where children and young people are learners.

When planning learning experiences our teaching staff ensure that the curriculum accords with the seven principles:

#### ***Challenge and Enjoyment***

*Learners should find their learning challenging, engaging and motivating. The curriculum should encourage high aspirations and ambitions for all. At all stages, learners of all aptitudes and abilities should experience an appropriate level of challenge, to enable each individual to achieve his or her potential. They should be active in their learning and have opportunities to develop and demonstrate their creativity. There should be support to enable learners to sustain their effort.*

We plan for challenge and enjoyment by:

- setting learners challenging goals
- making learners think hard about their learning
- ensuring that learning is active and engaging to motivate all learners
- ***Breadth***

*All learners should have opportunities for a broad, suitably weighted range of experiences. The curriculum should be organised so that they will learn and develop through a variety of contexts within both the classroom and other aspects of school life*

We plan for breadth by:

- using a variety of contexts through which to develop and demonstrate learning
- giving all pupils the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of school life.

**NB: The final outcomes and experiences by design are intended to provide the overall breadth of the curriculum across all curricular areas.**

### ***Progression***

*Learners and young people should experience continuous progression in their learning from 3 to 18 within a single curriculum framework. Each stage should build upon earlier knowledge and achievements. Learners should be able to progress at a rate which meets their needs and aptitudes, and keep options open so that routes are not closed off too early.*

We plan for progression by:

- ensuring that all learners have the opportunity to achieve appropriate success
- sharing expectations and standards with learners
- reviewing and evaluating learners' progress
- providing timely, accurate verbal and written feedback on learning.

### ***Depth***

*There should be opportunities for learners to develop their full capacity for different types of thinking and learning. As they progress, they should develop and apply increasing intellectual rigour, drawing different*

*strands of learning together, and exploring and achieving more advanced levels of understanding.*

We plan for depth by:

- giving learners the opportunity to develop and apply greater intellectual rigour
- giving learners the opportunity to develop secure understanding

### ***Personalisation and choice***

*The curriculum should respond to individual needs and support particular aptitudes and talents. It should give each child increasing opportunities for exercising responsible personal choice as they move through their school career. Once they have achieved suitable levels of attainment across a wide range of areas of learning the choice should become as open as possible. There should be safeguards to ensure that choices are soundly based and lead to successful outcomes.*

We plan for personalisation and choice by:

- taking account of their prior learning
- ensuring that all learners have ownership of the learning
- taking account of different learning styles.

### ***Coherence***

*Taken as a whole, learner's learning activities should combine to form a coherent experience. There should be clear links between the different aspects of learner's learning, including opportunities for extended activities which draw different strands of learning together.*

We plan for coherence by:

- helping learners see the links between different aspects of learning

- providing opportunities for learners to transfer and apply learning in different contexts.

### **Relevance**

*Learners should understand the purposes of their activities. They should see the value of what they are learning and its relevance to their lives, present and future.*

We plan for relevance by:

- ensuring learners understand the purpose of the activity
- making links with learners' experiences, learning and interests within and beyond the school.

Curriculum for Excellence details expectations of learning and progression through a series of levels - early to fourth. Within these levels the children are experiencing ways of developing their skills and attributes, to enhance their knowledge and understanding

Level	Stage
Early	The pre-school years and Pr. 1 or later for some
First	To the end of Pr. 4, but earlier or later for some
Second	To the end of Pr. 7, but earlier or later for some
Third and Fourth	S.1 to S.3, but earlier for some and the fourth level broadly equates to SCQF level 4

## Languages

This curricular area consists of:

Literacy and English - Listening and talking, reading and writing

Modern languages - French (P1-7), Spanish (P5-7)

Language is a key aspect of our culture and literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities through all aspects of life. Our school provides a broad range of learning opportunities which will contribute to the development of Literacy and English. Literacy is taught through all subjects, not just during English lessons.

We teach Literacy and English through relevant, real-life, enjoyable contexts often building on the children's own experiences. It may be taught through play and other planned activities. Children are encouraged to work collaboratively - with partners- as well as on their own. Pupils often communicate their work to others eg online, to other schools and classes, to a wider audience. ICT is widely used throughout all Literacy and English work.

Throughout all the levels teachers plan to enable their learners to develop their skills with increasing depth.

**Scots** language studies are very much included in their English work.

Scottish texts are used to help develop an appreciation of Scotland's vibrant literary heritage.

There are some lessons which encourage an understanding of our **Gaelic** heritage. We encourage Gaelic speakers to visit the school and staff have enough experience of the Gaelic language and can teach the children some of the basics.

**French** is taught to P1-7. Learning other languages enables children to make connections with different people and their cultures. Much of this learning is through songs and games and children are encouraged to join in and have fun and learn at the same time.

**Spanish** is taught to P5-7 on Thursdays as part of the ASG learning days.

## Mathematics

Mathematics consists of studies in:

- Number, money and measure
- Shape, position and movement
- Information Handling

We recognise that maths is important in our everyday life. It allows us to make sense of the world around us and to manage our lives. Maths plays an important role in other subject areas like science or technologies. We aim to make all our maths lessons rich and stimulating and to engage all our learners from Pr. 1 to Pr. 7.

All children are encouraged, through experiencing success in maths, to develop their confidence in taking risks, asking questions and exploring alternate solutions to problems without fear of being wrong. They will work collaboratively - with partners- to help them to reason logically and creatively through discussion of maths ideas and concepts.

Teachers use active learning situations in the class to provide opportunities for all the children to observe, explore, investigate, experiment, play, discuss and reflect. Children are helped to develop their mental agility. There is appropriate use of technology.

## Expressive Arts

The areas of the curriculum which we describe as the Expressive Arts include music, art and design, drama, PE, dance and movement. The sharing of expertise between the specialist teacher and the class teacher gives rise throughout the year to a great deal of lively work.



*An African Sunset*

The Expressive Arts, is an essential part of the pupil's curriculum and develops and provides outlets for talents, creative abilities, individual expression and response. Although much of the work done in this area is integrated across the curriculum, our specialist teachers ensure that a planned development of skills and techniques takes place within the individual areas of the Expressive Arts programme.

Expressive Arts aims to promote pupils development in all areas plus developing confidence and self-esteem and a growing awareness of cultural heritage, values and diversity.

Pupil's Artwork is constantly on display in the school.

Chanter instruction is available as an option. The instructor visits Kinlochbervie each Week. This normally leads on to bagpipe playing in secondary school.

Pupils also have the opportunity to learn fiddle with weekly lessons from a fiddle instructor, also in Kinlochbervie..

The school stages a drama event every Christmas.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

Health and wellbeing are positive and dynamic concepts that embrace physical, emotional and social dimensions.

We have a comprehensive Health Programme that considers the 3 above dimensions. We aim to enable the children to explore and clarify their beliefs, attitudes and values, develop personal and interpersonal skills and increase their knowledge and understanding of a range of health issues.

We are providing children with a variety of health promotion initiatives, for example, healthy snacks, healthy meals and providing drinking water, sporting activities and promoting citizenship and achieved our award as a Health Promoting School at Level 4 in October 2005.

All children participate in all aspects of PE. Lessons take place in Kinlochbervie every Thursday. 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 through the years, having had the county individual champion in golf and badminton.

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

We maintain productive flower and vegetable gardens in the school grounds as well as a tree nursery.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Staff will support the emotional development and wellbeing of pupils through formal and informal curricular activities. Any concerns about a pupil's wellbeing can be discussed with the Mr Smart. Schools have access to Highland Council's Primary Mental Health Worker Service and consultation and advice may be sought if there are concerns that might require more targeted support. Parents would generally be involved in discussions beforehand, however a young person over the age of 12 can ask for support themselves.

All senior pupils have the chance to experience a residential trip, for a 2-3 days fieldwork. Trips in recent years have included: Orkney and Ridgeway Adventure Centre.

### **Religious and Moral Education**

Religious Education in Durness School is approached on a nondenominational basis. The aim of our Religious Education programme is to provide our pupils with an understanding and appreciation of the stories from the bible, the moral values and attitudes they impart and an awareness and tolerance of other world religions, beliefs and festivals. The teaching of Religious and Moral Education aids the development of the understanding of religion as a significant area of human experience. It enables the pupils to explore questions relating to the meaning of life and to develop responsible attitudes. We have monthly assemblies which are conducted by the local minister, members of staff and our own classes.

Moral issues are dealt with in a sensitive way in the classroom or at assemblies. We have Personal and Social Development Policy in which our aims are:

- To help the pupils have an appropriately positive regard for self, and for others and their needs
- To develop life skills to enable them to participate effectively and safely in society



• To identify values held by pupils and society and how they affect thoughts and actions, and to encourage increasing responsibility for their own lives. We also have a programme for developing Citizenship. As Religious Education is required by statute to be included in the curriculum, parents who wish to have their child withdrawn from religious activities should inform the school.

### **Social Studies**

Social Studies is the curriculum area in which children acquire and develop the skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding which they need in order to understand themselves and the world around them.

Pupils should:

- Develop an understanding of the environment, their place within it and the factors, past and present that have shaped it.
- Acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to interact effectively with the environment in all aspects of life.
- Progressively recognise the knowledge, understanding and skills associated with social subjects.
- Develop informed attitudes and values relating to the use of resources and sustainable global development.

### **Sciences**

Through learning in the sciences, children develop their interest in, and understanding of, the living, material and physical world. They engage in a whole variety of tasks which allows them to develop important skills to become creative, inventive and enterprising adults.



(We took part in Rocket Science - Seeds in Space experiments.)

Learning in science is organised in the following areas:-

- Planet Earth
- Forces, electricity and waves
- Biological systems
- Materials
- Topical science
- Through teaching science our school aims to:-
- Develop a curiosity and understanding of their environment and their place in the world
- Help them to demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the big ideas and concepts of the sciences
- Develop skills for learning, life and work
- Develop skills of scientific enquiry and investigation using practical techniques
- P7 pupils have the opportunity to work on the *Goblin Car Racing Car Project* with their peers from Kinlochbervie and Scourie. This involves build an electrically powered kit car and entering the *Scottish Goblin Car rally* held annually in Alford, Aberdeenshire.



Goblin Car Race 2018

### **Technologies**

The technologies curriculum aims to provide scope for developing technological skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes through creative, practical and work related activities. Children will have experiences which can be applied in business, computing science, food, textiles, craft and design.

We have excellent Information Communication Technology Resources including PC computers with access to the Internet, Scanners, Digital Cameras, Interactive White Board and a wide selection of software, appropriate for all curricular areas.

The use of ICT is integrated into all areas of the pupils' curriculum, the skills are taught in a progressive manner and applied to work in maths, language and where appropriate to all other curricular areas.

The children have opportunities for cooking and baking. We have very good resources to enable them to design and make items using textiles and other craft materials.

### **Support for Learning (SFL)**

At present, we have full time Pupil Support Assistant, covered by two PSA's, plus our Support for Learning teacher one day a week. Our SFL team supports all the pupils and staff at the school. Although they may give additional support to pupils with specific difficulties or needs, they do at times work with all groups of children in the school in all areas of curriculum. The SFL teacher also assists the Class Teachers in designing and obtaining appropriate materials/resources for use in the classroom. Where a child has specific needs, the most appropriate help is given through negotiation and consultation between the Head Teacher, Class Teacher, SFL Staff, parents, and where appropriate, pupils. We hold interagency meetings involving all the above plus other agencies such as School Doctor/Nurse/Social Workers/Support Specialists etc, when required.

The Support for Learners Website: [Support for Learners Website](#)

The support teacher monitors the progress of pupils formally recognised as having special educational needs. The needs of such pupils are generally catered for within the normal pattern of courses but with specialist advice and support as required via Tutorials and if required, a

child's plan may be put in place to outline an action plan to help organise, monitor and regularly review a child's progress. Parents and pupils will be involved in these procedures and in reviews.

### **Homework**

Research has shown that the completion of homework has a very positive and significant effect on children's achievement and embeds positive learning habits to support life-long learning.

Purposes:

- It allows consolidation of work done in school
- It allows for children to prepare for the work to come
- It develops research skills such as using libraries and other resources which may not be available in the classroom
- It provides opportunities for individual work
- It provides structured opportunities for parental involvement and support
- It provides information for parents about the on-going work of the class
- It encourages the children to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for learning
- It develops good habits of independence and self-discipline in learning
- It trains pupils in planning and organizing their time.

If pupils or parents have any problems with homework /instructions given or expectation's, then please contact the class teacher immediately so that the problem can be discussed and sorted out.

All children from Primary 4 to 7 may be asked to complete a short personal project and/or prepare a personal talk during the course of the school year.

Homework tasks may often include a practical activity if it has links to their class projects eg making a Black house during the Clearances project or a model from recycled junk during a Recycling project etc.

### **Global Citizenship through Connecting Classrooms: Kenya**

Our North West Sutherland Schools are partnered with two schools in Kenya; Sachangwan High School and Nguzu River Primary School.

Together we have worked on a number of projects: outdoor learning, numeracy strategies, gender equality and the UN Rights of the Child.

### **Desired Outcomes for Connecting Classrooms Kenya**

- Through global citizenship education empower young people to be active citizens, willing and able to contribute to the development of a fair, sustainable society, locally and globally.
- To develop skills that enable children and young people to participate in their communities, to think critically, to challenge discrimination and stereotyping and to value all human beings as equal.
- To join together two associated schools' groups in Kenya and Scotland through collaborative global citizenship projects.
- Through the context of the British Council core skills work together towards the development of a professional network to support teacher learning and practice in global citizenship.
- To further extend and embed the partnerships between NW Sutherland and Molo District, Nakuru County school communities.

### **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.

### Equal Opportunities

Durness Primary School is an Equal Opportunities School and:

- has an Equal Opportunities Policy
- is opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination;
- provides equality of opportunity through its ethos and working practices
- promotes understanding and respect of other people's cultural identity and beliefs;
- aligns itself with the Education Service's Anti-Racist and Multi-Cultural guidelines for Primary and Nursery Schools (May 1997).

### 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.

Parent-line Scotland is a national, confidential helpline providing advice and support to anyone caring for or concerned about a child, open seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Telephone number is: **08000 28 22 33** or email:

[parentlinescotland@children1st.org.uk](mailto:parentlinescotland@children1st.org.uk)

### Complaints Procedures

Any parent with a complaint should contact the Head Teacher in the first instance, either by phone, e-mail or writing at the earliest opportunity. The Head Teacher will then deal with the complaint in line with The Highland Council Complaints procedure. In the event that a satisfactory resolution cannot be agreed, parents should then contact the **Area Education Manager** as detailed below.

Alison Donald Area Education Manager  
Area Education, Culture & Sport Offices  
Drummuie  
Golspie  
KW10 6TA  
Tel: 01408 635338

Please note that transport is **not** a school responsibility and any queries should be addressed to the **Local Transport Officer, Transport Co-**

Ordination Unit, Community Services, Highland Council HQ,  
Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX.

### **Placing Requests - Parental Choice**

Each school serves its own particular catchment area. Pupils whose homes are located in that area will have priority in being allocated a place in the school. However, parents have the right to specify the school in which they wish to place their child. Application must be made to the Area Education Manager: Area Education Offices, Drummie, Golspie, KW10 6TA.

Placing request forms can be obtained from:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/11/school\\_enrolment/2](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/11/school_enrolment/2)

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

If pupils live out-with the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Durness Primary School, they can contact the Head Teacher, Mr Graeme Smart, to arrange a visit.

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

## **ADVERSE WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSURES**

### **TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL DURING ADVERSE WEATHER**

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 Education Authority 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 over-ride good judgement. Schools normally make alternative arrangements for missed examinations.

**The school updates its procedures for adverse weather closure annually, therefore:-**

- **parents** should advise schools of an alternative address, as close as possible to the school, which may be used by their children in emergencies.
- **the school** will advise parents of normal local arrangements for school transport and any special arrangements in the event of adverse weather.

In order to check whether Durness Primary School is open, parents can do one of the following:

- 1 Telephone **0800 564 2272** and enter the school PIN **04 1130**
- 2 Listen to the radio. Details of radio bulletin times are on a separate sheet.
- 3 If possible we will try to contact parents.

If the weather deteriorates during the school day, we sometimes have to have an early closure. All parents are informed that the children are to be sent home at a certain time. No child will leave school until this has been done.

**When weather conditions are poor:**

**Local radio stations** issue news and weather bulletins on traffic conditions and school closures. Transmissions may not cover all households and may be subject to re-scheduling but should be helpful. Parents are



advised to remain "tuned in" to ongoing road weather, or school information updates.

### **Broadcast times:**

#### **BBC Radio Highland**

6.30 am  
7.30 am  
8.30 am  
12.30 pm  
4.30 pm  
5.30 pm

In extreme conditions, Radio Highland will interrupt Radio Scotland transmissions, usually on the hour, to carry emergency bulletins.

#### **Moray Firth Radio ([www.mfr.co.uk](http://www.mfr.co.uk))**

Morning bulletins will be at **7.10 am, 7.40 am, 8.10 am and 8.40 am** and will also include local information on weather, roads and conditions affecting schools. In severe conditions, normal programmes will be interrupted more frequently to carry emergency bulletins.

Please do not telephone local Radio for advice, but listen to appropriate broadcasts.

#### **For pupils using school transport:**

- Parents should advise their children on how long they should wait at the pick-up point for their transport. This will depend on the prevailing weather conditions and the availability of shelter at the pick-up point. During adverse weather conditions no pupil is expected to wait longer than twenty minutes past the normal "pick-up" time.
- Parents should note differences between **contract** vehicles and **public service** vehicles. Drivers of **contract** vehicles are advised not to drop off children where there is any doubt that they may not safely reach

home or other place of shelter. Drivers of **public service** vehicles must travel their normal routes and cannot make special provision for the individual pupils.

- Where parents are concerned about weather conditions at “drop-off” points, they should contact the school as early as possible.

**When weather conditions are poor, parents should arrange to have children met at the “drop-off” point, especially where public service transport is used.**

### **Useful Links**

Highland Council - Primary Curriculum Rationale - Audit Tool

Building the Curriculum 3:

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc3/index.asp>

Highland Council - anti-bullying Policy:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti\\_bullying\\_-\\_guidance\\_for\\_schools](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools)

### **Useful Links:**

Highland Curriculum Design GLOW Group:

<http://highlandcfeassessmentblog.wordpress.com/>

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