

Orphir Community School

Tuesday 10 June 2025

Term 4 Update – bumper edition!

This is a busy term and busy last few weeks – please check out the dates below and make sure you note any relevant dates/changes/venues.

Certificated Congratulations!	
Jacob	Helping others with writing in Plan, Do, Review and all-round kindness
Teagan and Layla	Working together to be supportive and help others with problems
Sahana and Virtue	Understanding that everyone is different but everyone deserves kindness
Sophie	Supporting others when they are worried
Olivia	Working well on key Maths and Reading skills
Henry and Jacob	Always being willing to help P1s and P2s with spelling words during Writing lessons

Primary Athletics

We have some fab photos of Jack and Sophie attached to this newsletter (courtesy of The Orcadian)! Congratulations to Jack who came third in the shot putt and Sophie who was first in the long jump and then overall champion for her age category (11-12 girls). A huge well done to our other Orphir athletes who gave it their best shot too throughout the day – against some grim weather. Well done everyone!

P7 Parents Evening Link

Please see the link below for the slideshow and presentation at P7 Parents evening at KGS last Thursday. It is also available on the KGS website homepage.

<https://youtu.be/9E3ce6u0u4M>

Absence and Contacts

Do remember to let the school office know if your child is going to be absent from school including holidays, medical appointments, dance exams, etc. This includes the reasons, too, so that the correct code can be marked on the register. It is also helpful to know when the main contacts change for the children if they are staying with other family members.

Calendar

For anyone planning holidays in advance, the next school year calendar is included and will be included routinely through the next lot of newsletters.

Orphir Community School Forum Minutes and Head Teacher's Report

The draft minutes from the Orphir Community School Forum meeting held on 28 May 2025 are attached at the end of this update. The next Forum meeting is Wednesday 3 September 2025 at 6.00pm in the Staffroom at the School.

2025-2026 School Improvement Priority

Our school improvement priority for session 2025-2026 will revolve around high quality teaching and learning in the subject areas of Religious & Moral Education and French. These priorities were identified after a staff self-evaluation session highlighted these as areas we feel we need to improve. This has already been shared with our Parent Council and we would now like to gather your views on this priority. Please complete the very short Microsoft Form ([2025-26 Priority Feedback](#)) to help share your views. There is also space on the form for you to highlight other areas we could work on next session.

Orphir Community School Curriculum Rationale

Please find attached to this update a visual which represents our curriculum rationale. All schools in Scotland are expected to have a clear curriculum rationale which outlines their approach to curriculum delivery and our has just been refreshed and developed by Mr Dearness, Mrs Williams and Mrs Rendall. If you have any comments on this then please add these to the above Microsoft Form.

Transition Days

Tuesday and Wednesday 10-11 June

We invite all the P3 children to the P4-7 class and all the nursery children going to P1 in August to our P1-3 class on Tuesday and Wednesday 10-11 June. For those days, the following timetable will happen on Tuesday and Wednesday:

Class	Time	Information
New P1s for August 2025	0930	Arrive at nursery as normal
(Tues only)	1020	Go through to P1-3 class
	1110	Break - bring a snack from home
	1245	School dinners in the dining hall - we will sort the dinners with the children
	1330	Back in to P1-3 class
(Wed only)	1420	Back through to nursery
	1530	Home time
New P4s	0930	Arrive at school as normal
		Go through to P4-7 class
New P1 <u>Parents only</u> for August 2025		
Thursday 19 June	0930	New P1 parent meeting in the school to meet with Grant Thomson and P1-3 class teacher

For the new P1s, please let us know if your child will not be staying the full school day on Tuesday and Wednesday.

New P1 Parents Meeting

We would like to invite all the parents of the children going into P1 in August to a meeting on Thursday morning 19 June at 9.30am. This is after the transition days so if you have any questions, please do ask.

Sports Day 24/6/2025

Moved to the 24th June, we are hoping for better weather! Fingers crossed! 🤞

Races start at 1pm, with ice cream for the bairns (there will be a charge for adults.)

P1-7 Leavers Disco - help please 😊

Information below for all attendees of the disco:

School Disco	Thursday 26 June 6.00pm-7.30pm
Theme	Well dressed
Cost	Nil
Supper	Please bring a plate of savoury/sweet food for the buffet

All P1-7 children are invited to attend what is always a fun evening. Children **must** be collected from the hall.

Help required please. For those able to help with supper, please complete the form via the link below. (2-4 helpers should suffice)

[Leavers Disco 26 June 2025](#)

This Term

We have a range of diary dates ahead of us. Most of these you will be aware of but it never does any harm to hear them again:

- Transition days: Tuesday 10th June.
- Transition days: Wednesday 11th June.
- Nursery trip to Shapinsay: Thursday 12th June.
- New Nursery parents to visit: Tuesday 17th June.
- New P1 Parents meeting: Thursday 19th June, 9.30am in school
- Last swimming day: Friday 20th June
- Sports Day: Tuesday 24th June - from 1.00pm
- Nursery beach day: Thursday 26th June.
- Leavers Disco: Thursday 26th June.
- Pupil Reports out: Friday 27th June
- Leavers Assembly: Wednesday 2nd July (in school)
- Last day of term: Friday 4th July.

Forward notice:

- In-service (school closed to pupils): Monday 18th August 2025.
- **First day of term 1: Tuesday 19th August 2025.**
- Term 1 Orphir Community School Forum Meeting: Wednesday 3 September 2025

Primary School Athletics

A huge well done to our 6 Primary School Athletics competitors. A huge thank also you to parents and family members who came along to support the bairns on a not so fine weather day.



NETBALL SUCCESS!

From our fabulous netball coaches:

A huge well done to the Orphir Orcas who have had another strong season. Finishing fourth in the top league, making the quarter finals of the knockout and finishing off the season by retaining the Peedie Schools trophy.

The P4/5 team have also done really well and just missed out on the playoffs by 1 point.

Thanks to all the kids who played throughout the year and parents for helping as well.

Kazia and Angela



Orphir Community School Forum (OCSF)

Minutes, Wednesday, 28 May 2025, in person

1 Welcome:

Liz welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Present:

Emma Diamond, Katy Beaton (Treasurer), Grant Thomson (Head Teacher), Liz Johnston (Chair), Shona Garson (Minutes), John Dearness (Principal/Class Teacher)

2 Apologies: Paula Powell

3 Previous minutes:

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2025

Proposed Liz Johnston

Seconded Katy Beaton

4 Matters arising

OUTDOOR EDUCATION PAYMENTS

- A complete list of payments, income from community council and fundraising and costs for outdoor education for P6 and 7 was issued to the Treasurer
- Liz is to check with any new netball coaches for the next school year regarding PVG checks
- Liz has advised all the coaches to liaise with school staff to organise keyholder inductions. This will allow coaches to use the facilities without school staff on site.

5 Treasurers' Report

In the bank is the total of £1547.86.

As this was Katy's last meeting, Liz gave a huge thank you on behalf of the parents of Orphir Community School and the OCSF team for Katy's many years on the committee and for undertaking the role of Treasurer.

6 HT Report (attached)

Grant circulated a paper copy of the Curriculum Rationale and a feedback form. He requested that feedback from the Forum members be passed to himself by next Wednesday 4 June 2025. This would then be circulated to the wider parent body. Initial thoughts were to issue the feedback form request via MS Forms. It was decided that the Head Teacher Report relating to the meeting would go out sooner (with next newsletter if minutes were not ready) to allow parents to see it before going out with the draft minutes for the next meeting.

7 Car Parking Management

It was noted that parents were parking in the area that staff used to park in and seems to work fine. No other issues noted at this time.

8 Hoy Update

John reported that the trip went really well and Grant confirmed that next year's residential trip would also be to Hoy. Discussion was held about the possibility of Orphir children going with children from schools that also fed into KGS. Grant explained that this has been raised with Outdoor Education staff before but it is not part of a transition programme; therefore in order to keep costs as low as possible and make best use of the resources, schools are joined up according to numbers for that purpose.

Discussion was had about organising alternative residential trips such as a trip to a city and taking in different events that way. Clearly not applicable for 2026 as this has already been agreed for Hoy but maybe look at planning and costing in Term 2 2025-26.

9 Transitions

Transitions from Nursery to P1, P3 to P4 and P7 to S1 were discussed with no questions further to the transitions information in the newsletter.

John spoke about funding/running a breakfast club. No concrete plans as such but watch this space.

10 Face to Face Day - Parent Council Chairs and Head Teachers

Mobile Phone Policy

Imogen Kerr presented information on a mobile phone policy that the council is working on with a small group of parent council chairs. Parents will be invited to give feedback/opinions in due course.

Relationships Policy

Cathy Lyner presented information on the preparation and work involved in compiling a relationships policy guidance for schools/education settings incorporating building relationships and regulation.

OIC Service Plan

Information was also presented on the OIC Service plan for the next 3 years.

11 Proposed calendar of Termly Meetings

Members present thought the idea of set type agenda items for each item would have a beneficial effect on trying to encourage more parents to attend at designated meetings where they may have more interest in certain topics.

12 AOCB

Leavers Disco

Children have requested and it was agreed that the Leavers Disco will take the form of 'bring a plate of food' included in the evening with the dancing and games.

Parents will not be required to help with the disco side of things (unless they want to) but parents will be asked to help serve supper and clear up afterwards in the dinner hall.

Cost of the School Day

Liz asked for this to be added to the next term's agenda.

Burns Supper

There is no Christmas Show in the school year of 2025-26 so OCSF could consider a Burns Supper fundraising event. One suggestion for a change, would be to have dinner, maybe a couple of small acts and then some dancing, eg Auskerry?

Date for diary was mentioned of 23 January 2026. Liz/Shona to book with Orphir Community Association.

Next Meeting Date –

Term 1 - 3 September 2025, 6pm in the staffroom

Orphir Parent Council Head Teacher Report

Wednesday 28th May 2025

As the academic year draws closer, we are in the process of finalising our staffing for 2025/2026. We anticipate no major changes to how our staffing looks but once finalised we will communicate this via our usual channels before the end of term.

We continued our termly attendance monitoring at the end of Term 3 and can report that our attendance up till the end of Term 3 for Orphir was 95%. This was a rise from 94% in Term 2 and is in line with the local authority target of 95%.

We are beginning the process of finalising our school and nursery improvement priorities for next academic year. Where we have not yet finalised our nursery priorities but from P1 to P7 it has been decided that our priority focus will be on high quality teaching and learning in Religious & Moral Education (RME) and French. These priorities were identified from staff after a self-evaluation session highlighted these were areas where further work could be done to improve outcomes for learners. At this stage it is hoped that our broad aims of the year will be to ensure that:

- Almost every learner in P1 to P7 receives consistent high-quality teaching and learning in RME and French every week.
- Almost every learner to be clear on their intended learning in RME/French and state which Curriculum for Excellence Level they are working within.
- Almost every learner can identify their Meta-Skills strengths within RME and French and see the links between these and real-life contexts.

Whilst we continue to flesh out what this will look like in terms of what the children will experience, we plan to take this to consultation to pupils and parents before the end of term so that we can hit the ground running in August (at the end of this meeting I would like to gather your views on how this could be best done).

John, Dawn and Lynn recently completed a piece of work creating a new curriculum rationale for Orphir Community School. In a nutshell this should explain why we do what we do and in the way that we do it - considering our unique qualities and context. All schools across Scotland are expected to have a clear curriculum rationale and this now works alongside our fairly recently refreshed vision, values and aims which help remind us of our purpose and gives us clear direction for our goals. We try our hardest to make sure that all we do stems from our curriculum rationale and matches with our vision, values and aims. We revisit these regularly with staff (usually in the August in-service day) and learners (at assembly) to make sure they are at the forefront of what we do and more importantly are real and lived.

Thanks to the Parent council for their contributions towards the P7 Hoy residential trip. They all came back glowing, if not slightly on the tired side and whilst there took part in a wide range of land and sea activities - for many their comfort zones were well and truly pushed and I think they even surprised themselves with some of the things they did. The results of the survey to our current P5 and P6 pupils highlighted that next year's residential trip will be to Hoy for P7.

Our second Intergenerational Event (snakes and ladders) was equally as popular as the first one and was very well attended by members of the community. Feedback from those in attendance on the day was 100% positive and we will look to repeat this again next session with plans to do something in partnership with the Orphir Community Association and really strengthen those school-community links even further.

A reminder to you all that school will be closed to pupils on Monday 5th June for in-service staff training. Other dates upcoming that have already been shared with you are as follows:

- Thursday 29th May: Primary Athletics.
- Tuesday 3rd June: Sports Day.
- Thursday 5th June: KGS transition information evening.
- Thursday 5th June: Bikeability Level 2.
- Friday 6th June: Puppet Man visit.
- Tuesday 10th June: KGS transition day.
- Wednesday 11th June: KGS transition day.

- Wednesday 11th June: Nursery to P1 transition day.
- Tuesday 17th June: New nursery parents to visit.
- Thursday 19th June: New P1s information morning.
- Thursday 26th June: Leavers Disco.
- Wednesday 2nd July: Leavers Assembly 2 PM.
- Friday 4th July. Last day of term 2 and academic year 2024-2025.

Forward notice that school remains closed to pupils on Monday 18th August 2025 and reopens on Tuesday 19th August for the first day of term 1.

Coming back after the Easter break our littlest pupils didn't seem to look so little and our oldest pupils looked a lot older. With only 5 full weeks left before the end of this academic year I want to take this opportunity to wish our P7's (Edith, Helga, Jack, Jamie, Rianne & Sophie) all the very best with their transition to Kirkwall Grammar School. We will miss them a great deal but they are ready to embark on their next adventure - we know we have done our job here when they appear ready to move on. Thanks to you all for the part you have played on making the experiences here at Orphir Community School so special for all our pupils. When it comes, enjoy the summer holidays and I look forward to seeing you all again in August.

Grant

Our Unique Qualities

- Our unique location overlooking Scapa Flow is a haven of biodiversity.
- We are a vibrant school with high levels of community engagement.
- Parental thoughts and concerns are valued and listened to.
- Nursery and two multi composite classes.
- Our school is a fun and friendly place to work and visit.
- Strong transition arrangements between classes and secondary school.
- We celebrate learning and achievement outwith school.

Our pupil voice groups ensure our learners have a say and are listened to.

Our Vision, Our Values, Our Aims

We use these to maintain our very positive school ethos

Article 3

Article 4

Article 12

Article 13

Article 15

Article 42



Flourish... and grow into the person that you want to be.

Orphir Community School Curriculum Rationale

The Curriculum - 'the totality of all that is planned for children & young people throughout their education'

4 Contexts of Learning at Orphir

The ethos and life of the school as a community

Opportunities for personal achievement

The purpose of the curriculum is to make sure that learners acquire the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence to be:

Teamwork

Respect

Kindness

Creativity

Successful Learners

Confident Individuals

Effective Contributors

Responsible Citizens

- We learn through play, active learning, child led learning and adult directed instruction.
- We build nurturing and inclusive relationships with all pupils.
- We have high expectations of everyone.
- We learn both indoors and outdoors.
- Children's rights are at the heart of our planning.
- We develop the knowledge, skills and values to support our learners to thrive now and help them prepare for the future.

Learning at Orphir

IDLs - where learning from more than one area of the curriculum is brought together in our contexts for learning. We might work in our class, as a whole school or as part of the whole authority in IDLs. We learn from each other and our many partners doing IDL in our way.

Interdisciplinary Learning

Curriculum Areas & Subjects

- Literacy & English/Languages
- Numeracy & Mathematics
- Health & Wellbeing
- Expressive Arts
- Religious & Moral Education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

How?

We are a Silver Rights Respecting School and a Daily Mile School.

Education, Leisure and Housing

School term dates - 2025 / 2026 (all dates are inclusive)

Term 1 2025	Tuesday 19 August – Friday 10 October. (39 days)
October holidays	Monday 13 October – Tuesday 28 October.
Term 2	Wednesday 29 October – Friday 19 December. (38 days)
Christmas holidays	Monday 22 December – Friday 2 January.
Term 3 2026	Monday 5 January – Friday 3 April. (61 days)
Schools closed	Thursday 12 February – Tuesday 17 February.
Spring holidays	Monday 6 April – Friday 17 April. (Easter Monday 6 April).
Term 4	Monday 20 April – Thursday 2 July. (52 days)
Schools closed	Monday 4 May (May Day holiday).
Schools closed	Monday 1 June.

Staff Only, In-service days are:

- Monday 18 August.
- Monday 27 – Tuesday 28 October.
- Tuesday 17 February.
- Monday 1 June.



Free Family Fun Day!

**Sunday 15th June, 12 - 3pm
@ Picky Arena**

- Bouncy Castles
- Giant Floor Games
- Dinosaur Hunt
- Bubble Tea
- Interactive Museum Corner
- Build Your Own Cathedral
- ...and much more!

**Find out more about what's in store
at orkney.gov.uk/familyfunday**

