

Orphir and Flotta Community Schools' Newsletter

Tuesday 30 August 2022

CERTIFICATES

Confident Individual (CI), Effective Contributor (EC),
Responsible Citizen (RC) or Successful Learner (SL)

Layla Nourse	SL	Listening carefully for all the sounds when writing
All children in new classes	CI	Brilliant transitions into their new classrooms

News from me...

And just like that we are in week three of the term! It has been an excellent start to the new academic year and all our new pupils (and staff) appear quite at home. We have hit the ground running with many elements of school life and you will read more about these throughout the newsletter.



In assembly last week, we reminded ourselves of the '5 Ways to Wellbeing' and why good wellbeing is so important. I was delighted that the children could remember so much about these 5 ways and had many examples to show what they looked like. We will continue to reinforce the benefits of good wellbeing and ways this can be achieved over the course of the year. The boys and girls also had some very good ideas of what we can display on our 'Wellbeing Board' which sits just outside the staffroom so I look forward to watching this evolve over time.

Proposed Industrial Action

There is a lot of talk at the moment about the proposed industrial action on 6, 7 & 8 September. Do keep an eye on the information sent out from the school office regarding this. The latest message is below:

Strike update - schools and nurseries - sent to parents and staff 30/8/22, 1415

Education officials in Orkney met on Monday (29 August) to discuss the potential impact on schools and nurseries if the planned national strike action over pay goes ahead on three days next week - 6, 7 and 8 September.

Further detailed information is required before confirmation can be given as to which settings may be closed, however, it is likely that there will be significant disruption. Parents and carers are advised to seek alternative childcare provision for those dates.

The Council's Corporate Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, James Wylie, said: "This is a fast-moving situation with school catering staff, cleaners, caretakers, teaching assistants and early years practitioners involved in the national industrial action.

"Before we can give absolute clarity on which settings will be closed, we are double checking all our information with individual establishments and reviewing the information coming forward from the teaching unions. As soon as we have a clear picture that ensures, first and foremost, the health and wellbeing of all our pupils and staff we will release the list of schools and nurseries affected if the strike action goes ahead.

"Our advice remains to plan for closure and therefore have a contingency plan in place for childcare over these three days."

The unions - Unison and GMB - have said their members will strike on these three days after talks with CoSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities), the umbrella body for Local Government, failed to reach an agreement in relation to a national pay award for Local Government staff for 2022-23.

School Priority Themes

Each school year we have to identify priority themes which form the basis of our continuous school improvement. This year, after staff and local authority self-evaluation, our themes are

Listening & Talking
The Curriculum and
Safeguarding and Child Protection.

These themes can all be found in *How Good Is Our School 4* - a document schools use to self-evaluate and keep getting better.

This can be quite abstract for our learners to understand so they have been introduced to our priorities in assembly as projects.

Project 1: Listening & Talking - lessons and activities we can do in class to get better at this

Project 2: Our Learning - what we learn, why we learn it, how we learn it and how we all learn differently

Project 3: Keeping Safe - who keeps us safe in school, what we should do if we do not feel safe, what adults in school need to do to keep us safe

We hope to involve the children (and you) at various stages throughout our improvement journey this year so if you have any ideas of sub themes you think should be addressed then please reach out.

Football Help Required

We are looking for a new football coach/coaching team? Jack Watson has written a lovely 'job advert' for this rewarding post. If you can help, do get in touch with the school.

Dear parents of Orphir school.

We are in need of a football coach. Would anyone be willing to take on the job? We are looking for someone that is kind, caring and forgiving. You will need to train people at least once a week. You would need to see where people play good. You then need to pick a team. You need to come to picky usually on Saturdays. You need to sign into the league and then we play other teams.

Please can anybody help us

Jack Watson (P5)

Orphir Community School Values

Huge thanks to those of you who filled out the form I issued last term to generate your ideas for our new school values. It was certainly no easy task but certain ones were clear favourites. Since coming back in August the children in both classes have been working to whittle these down to four and I am pleased to announce that the new core values of Orphir Community School are...

Kindness

Creativity

Teamwork

Respect

In addition to these new values, the children have been generating ideas for new weekly certificate designs and we hope to be able to share these with you soon. It really has been all go!

Parent Council

On Thursday 25th August, we had an extremely successful first Parent Council meeting of the session. I can honestly and openly say that we are graced with an incredibly kind,

generous and inclusive Parent Council body who genuinely have the interests of ALL the children of Orphir Community School at heart. The DRAFT meeting minutes will be sent out today as well, and when you read through them you will see what I mean.

Attendance



A gentle reminder to continue phoning the school office to inform us if your child/children are absent. We appreciate the call as soon as possible (before 10.00am) so that we can account for all those who do not show. If your child is absent and you have not made contact please expect a call from one of us here at school (likely Shona). If we can't reach you then we will move to your emergency contacts. We do this to make sure all our children and young people are safe and where they should be.

End of Day Arrangements

With the new school year starting, children often start new activities. This can affect end of day arrangements. We now have three lists in the office to check the children off as they leave at the end of the day. Bus/Taxi and Walking (this is all the children we take out to the parents/carers at the car park). So we know where to put the children at the end of the day, if your normal end of day arrangements change, do let us know. Sometimes children tell us one thing but we generally always like to check with the parents. If you have a regular change every week, we can add info to the bottom of these lists which helps all staff to make sure the children go to the right place.



Pupil Voice Groups

Continuing our commitment in listening to the views, wishes and experiences of our children and young people we are launching our pupil voice groups this term. By involving our pupils in decision making groups we hope to develop life skills such as teamwork (which is by chance our new value), problem-solving and citizenship. We also want to continue generating a reciprocated sense of feeling valued, trusted and respected across the entire school and these groups are the perfect way to do just that. Our pupil voice groups for 2022-2023 are...

Pupil Council
Library Development Group
Junior Janitors
Gardening & Eco Group

I am pretty sure that you will hear more from these groups over the course of the year. If you have any skills or expertise you feel you can offer us in any of the above then get in touch - we would LOVE your help!

In-Service Training

A reminder that school is closed to pupils on **Thursday 6th and Friday 7th October** for In-Service training.

Provisional Dates

We have some provisional dates for the year ahead to share with you for key school events that you might want to highlight in the diary.

- Parents Evening 1: Wednesday 23rd November & Thursday 24th November.
- School Show: Wednesday 14th December & Thursday 15th December.
- Parents Evening 2: Wednesday 8th March & Thursday 9th March.
- School Bus Trip: Friday 9th June.
- Sports Day: Thursday 15th June.
- Reports Issued: Friday 23rd June.
- Curriculum Showcase Afternoon: Friday 23rd June.

Term 1 Upcoming Events

- Tuesday 20th September, P1 Health Screening
- Friday 30th September, Monday 3rd October, Tuesday 4th October, P6 Outdoor Education Days with Stenness
- Wednesday 5th October, Last Day of Term 1

Suspension Files

In our quest of reusing stuff where possible and giving it away when we can't use it, we have approximately 30 suspension files needing a new home. If anybody needs some, please get in touch with Shona in the school office. For a standard sized filing cabinet (not A4).

Recycle with Michael

Please check with your child, they have gone home with Recycle with Michael bags if you are having a post summer wardrobe clearout. Our clothes bin is open and this generates a small amount of money for the school.

Xpressions

Shona has included the Xpressions information in this newsletter. For those not already using it, it is an app you can download and all the info Shona sends out would go there as we send by email and Xpressions. It means that all the info is in one place and you don't have to go through emails to find it.

Finally from me...

That was a fair amount of information to take in! Remember that you can access the newsletters on our school website, <https://www.orphircommunityschool.co.uk/> and if there

is anything that you would like to see included in our updates please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. At this time of year, it is always pertinent to remind you all to enjoy the lighter nights as much as you can as before you know they will be a distant memory and we will be decorating the Christmas tree! (it's never too early to mention Christmas!!)

Kind regards as always,

Grant Thomson

Grant Thomson
 Linked Head Teacher
 Flotta, Orphir & Stenness Community Schools

Education, Leisure and Housing

School Term Dates 2022 to 2023

All dates are inclusive.

Term 1.	Tuesday 16 August to Wednesday 5 October (37 days).
October holidays.	Thursday 6 October to Friday 21 October.
Term 2.	Monday 24 October to Wednesday 21 December (43 days).
Christmas holidays.	Thursday 22 December to Wednesday 4 January.
Term 3.	Thursday 5 January to Friday 31 March (59 days).
Schools closed.	Friday 10 February to Tuesday 14 February.
Spring holidays.	Monday 3 April to Friday 14 April. (Easter Monday 10 April).
Term 4.	Monday 17 April to Wednesday 28 June (51 days).
Schools closed.	Monday 1 May (May Day holiday).
Schools closed.	Monday 5 June.

Staff only, in-service days are:

- Monday 15 August 2022.
- Thursday 6 and Friday 7 October 2022.
- Tuesday 14 February 2023.
- Monday 5 June 2023.

Term 1 Timetable

My timetable for term 1 shall be as follows:

	AM	PM	Orphir contact details
Monday	Stenness	Orphir	811 265
Tuesday	Orphir	Stenness	admin.orphir@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk
Wednesday	Stenness	Orphir	Stenness contact details
Thursday	Stenness	Orphir	850 212
Friday	Orphir	Stenness	admin.stenness@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk



Education, Leisure & Housing Services

Orphir Community School

Orphir, Orkney, KW17 2RB

Head Teacher: Grant Thomson



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

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August 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

Free Communication App available for Parents



A free service is available for parents to ensure communication between school and home is easier and more effective.

A free app called Groupcall Xpressions can be installed on your mobile phone or tablet. It currently supports both Apple iOS and Android devices (with Windows mobile to follow). If you have children in different schools and those schools also use Groupcall Xpressions, you will be able to view information on multiple children within the same app.

What do you need to do now?

- Download the free app and following the instructions for set up. Please ensure you use your main contact mobile number and email address when registering the app.
- If you have any problems with downloading check the online help at www.parents.groupcall.com/faqs/. You may also need to contact school to make sure your email and mobile contact details are up to date to ensure you can access the service.

Once installed and set up you will immediately be able to receive and respond to information sent by school directly through the app. This is especially useful in rural areas (like Orphir!) where mobile signal is perhaps not as good as it could be.

As all communications sent through the Xpression app are free this will help everyone to reduce the cost as well as improve the service so please download today!

Grant Thomson
Head Teacher