

Durness Primary School

INFORMATION BOOKLET

2016-2017



Contents

Additional Support Needs	page 19
Admission Arrangements	page 6
Adverse Weather	Page 22
Assessment and Reporting	Page 9
Attendances	page 9
Child Protection	page 20
Complaints Procedures	page 21
Contact - Home /School	page 8
Curriculum	page 5
Data Protection	page 20
Discipline	page 8
Educational Aims	page 5
Equal Opportunities	page 20
Expressive Arts	page 16
First Day at School	page 6
Getting to School	page 7
Health and Wellbeing	page 16
Health Care	page 9
Homework	page 19
Introduction	page 3
Languages	page 15
Mathematics	page 15
Meals	page 7
Nursery	page 7
Out of School Activities	page 11
Parental Assistance and Support	page 10
Personal and Social Development	page 5
Placing Requests	page 21
Religious and Moral Education	page 17
School Parent Council	page 10
Sciences	page 17
Secondary School	page 7
Social Studies	page 17
Support for Learning	page 18
Staff	page 4
Technologies	page 18
Term Dates	page 4
The Seven Principles	Page 11-14
Times	page 4
Uniform	page 8
Useful Information	page 22-24

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 nursery room, 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 17 pupils. The school makes much use of the local modern village hall for P.Ed. 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 21st 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
Acting Head Teacher

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

Telephone: 01971 511237
HT e-mail: graeme.smart@highland.gov.uk
School e-mail: durness.primary@highland.gov.uk

Website <http://durnessprimaryschool.weebly.com>

Staff

Acting Head Teacher	Mr Graeme Smart
Acting Depute Head Teacher	Ms Katy Lee
Class Teacher (P1-7)	Mrs Margaret MacRae
Support for Learning	Mrs Gail Ross
Art	Mrs Nicola Poole
Chanter Instructor	Mr Sandy Wregg
Clerical Assistant	Ms Wendy Morrison
Pupil Support Assistant	Mrs Selena Campbell
School Cook	Miss Misha Prazakova
School Cleaner	Mr Alan Andrews
School Chaplain	Rev Dean Oelofse (Church of Scotland)

School Times

9.00	Classes Begin
10:30 - 10:50	Interval
12.15 - 1.00pm	Lunch
2.35pm	End of Day P1-3
3:05pm	End of Day P4-7

Term Dates 2016 - 2017

Autumn Term	Tuesday 16 th August - Friday 7 th October 2016
Winter Term	Monday 26 th October - Friday 23 rd December 2016
Spring Term	Monday 9 th January - Wednesday 5 th April 2017
Summer Term	Monday 24 th April - Friday 30 th June 2017

Other School Closures:

In-service Days	Thursday 22 nd and Friday 23 rd September 2016
School Closed	Monday 20 th and Tuesday 21 st February 2017
In-service Day	Wednesday 22 nd February 2017
May Day	Monday 1 st May 2017
School Closed	Thursday 4 th May 2017 (School used as polling station for local elections)

School Roll 11 pupils (December 2016)

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.

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 21st 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.

A Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education by providing a Coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for 3-18, firmly focussed on the needs of the child and designed to enable them to develop the 4 capacities, which are:

- Successful Learner
- Confident Individual
- Effective Contributor
- Responsible Citizen

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.

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

Both our Standards and Quality report and our School Improvement report can be provided by email or paper form on request. Please contact the school office for this to be arranged.

Admission Arrangements

Dates for enrolling children in P1, usually in January, 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 Care and Learning Alliance (CALA) 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?
- 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?
- Can he tie his 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

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 room in the school every morning Monday to Thursday, 9:00am to 1:00pm. For further information please contact the nursery leader, Mrs Selena Campbell on 07793 086586 (Mobile), or 01971 511237 (school).

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, Laing, Sutherland.

Tel:01971 521767 Email:graeme.smart@highland.gov.uk

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

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 2.35pm. 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.

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 -3.

The cost of a school meal for p 4 -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.

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. Application forms are available in the school or on the Highland Council website. 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. A fleece jacket is an optional extra. They are priced as follows: Cardigans and sweatshirts £9 each, Polo shirts £6 each and fleeces £13 each. 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. 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.

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 and parents will be informed and their support welcomed in cases of protracted or severe in discipline.

Contact between Home and School

Durness primary School run a very open policy on contact between parents and teachers and you are welcome to make an appointment to come along 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 chat, an appointment can be made by contacting the school office.

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. Our school website also has lots of information for parents and is updated regularly.

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 head teacher has a mobile phone and she can also be contacted using this. Email is a useful way to contact the school office and many parents find this a useful and a quick way to send messages.

The head teacher and teachers value face to face communication with parents. All parents can arrange a meeting with staff if necessary.

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.

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 dental hygienist visits occasionally. The Speech Therapist visits when the need arises.

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 before 9am. When returning to school after an absence, pupils must bring a note dated and signed by a parent, giving the reason for the time absent.

If it transpires your child is to be off for several days, please let us know as it helps with class planning.

Permission to leave during the school day: If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment etc, pupils need to bring with them a note signed by a parent or guardian.

Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made out-with school hours.

If a pupil falls ill during the school day, parents are contacted for them 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.

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 Parent Council replaced 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:

Ms Leanne McKee, Chairperson

Mrs Selena Campbell, Treasurer - 511793

Mrs Tricia Morrison, Secretary - 511780

Parents will be notified of Council meetings and minutes, correspondence and other information pertaining to the Council is available in the School.

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 that will help you find out how you can help your child at home.

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: <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/>

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

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

Junior Youth Club - (P4 - 7) - Jill and Tony Jackson - 511737

Durness Diggers - Mrs MacRae - 511237

Shinty - Paula MacLeod - 521767

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, learners's learning activities should combine to form a coherent experience. There should be clear links between the different aspects of learners'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

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.

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.

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.

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 wall hangings in the Village Information Centre.

Chanter instruction is available as an option, usually from P5. The instructor comes weekly. This normally leads on to bagpipe playing in secondary school.

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.

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 and free fruit for P1 and P2, providing drinking water, sporting activities and promoting citizenship and achieved our award as a Health Promoting School at Level 4 in October 2005.

The children receive swimming lessons at Bettyhill which 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 through the 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.

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. 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, Orkney and Aberdeen.

Religious and Moral Education

Religious Education in Durness School is approached on a non-denominational 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 weekly 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 a 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.

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

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. Pupils join with other local schools in the annual Egg Race in March which is a technology challenge event.

Support for Learning

At present, we have one pupil support assistant, who covers five hours a week plus a Support for Learning teacher one day a fortnight. Our Support for Learning 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 Head Teacher, Class Teacher, Support for Learning 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 is:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/supportforlearners/>

Additional Support Needs

The support teachers monitor 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. More information can be found about the Highland Council model for child's plans at: http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11/co-ordinated_support_plan

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 organising 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.

Reporting and Assessment

School reports are given out once a year. A report is issued in May which indicates each child's progress through the levels of work in a Curriculum for Excellence. Assessment is continuously monitored throughout the year and progress is recorded in personal progress folders which are updated every term. These contain examples of your child's best work, photographs, assessment records and children's own self- assessment comments. There are two open days in the year when parents are invited to come in to look at the work being done and to have an interview with the class teacher. Parents are encouraged to come in at other times if they want to meet with the teachers. It's a good idea to come along and have a look at your child's work - they always value your positive input and encouragement.

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, Ms Pene Rowe, Highland Child Protection Committee, Kinmylies Building, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NN

Telephone (01463) 703483, Email: Pene.Rowe@highland.gov.uk

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.

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections, you can email the Head of Schools Analysis, Mick Wilson, at: mick.wilson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to The ScotXed Support Office, Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ.

Parentline 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.

The number is: **08000 28 22 33** or email: 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.

Please note that transport is not a school responsibility and any queries should be addressed to the **Local Transport Officer**, also detailed below.

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

Annett Menday
Highland Council
Local transport Officer
Government Buildings
Girnigoe Street
Wick
KW1 4HW
Tel: 01955 609561

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: Mr Maurice MacIntyre, Area Education Offices, Drummuie, Golspie, KW10 6TA.

Placing request forms can be obtained from:

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 Acting 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 1960**
- 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.

Lochbroom FM will carry bulletins at quarter-hour intervals between 7.15 am and 8.45 am.

Moray Firth Radio (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 Documents:

Highland Council – Primary Curriculum Rationale – Audit Tool

Building the Curriculum 3:

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

Highland Council – Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdoonlyres/96C4BBD1-7FC1-4C70-AA25-38386F1C4B1E/0/LTAPolicyfinalSept09.pdf>

Useful Links:

LTS Building Your Curriculum:

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

Highland Curriculum Design GLOW Group:

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

Highland CfE Assessment Blog:

<https://portal.glowscotland.org.uk/establishments/thehighlandcouncil/CfE%20Curriculum%20Design/default.aspx>