



# North Walls Community School



## Handbook 2025-2026



This handbook comprises seven sections to guide you through the life and work of the school in striving to provide excellent education for all our pupils, two appendices of ancillary information, and a feedback questionnaire.

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## Foreword from the Head of Schools

I am pleased to introduce the School Handbook for session 2025/26 and hope that it will provide you with all the relevant information you may need concerning your child's school.

In Orkney we have a wide range of schools, different types and sizes; each one provides a learning experience which is very much linked to the community the school serves. The School Handbook offers an insight into the life and ethos of the school, and also offers advice and assistance which you may find helpful in both supporting your child and getting involved in your child's education.

If you have any queries, please contact the Head Teacher of your child's school in the first instance and they will be happy to offer any clarification you may need.

### **Peter Diamond**

Head of Education

Footnote: If you would like a printed copy of this handbook, please ask the school.

It may be possible to offer some assistance in helping to translate all or part of this handbook for parents whose first language is not English. Enquiries should be directed to Education, Leisure and Housing by telephone on 01856 873535 or email [education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk)

## **Service pledges: Orkney Islands Council's Vision, Values and Aims**

This is our community. We want the very best for everyone.

Our core values are:

- Respect.
- Responsibility.
- Enjoyment.
- Being Safe.
- Being Healthy.
- Being Active.
- Being all we can be.

Our vision embraces many aspirational and achievable ambitions. We believe that by working together we will support everyone to develop as active, healthy individuals who take responsibility for their own learning and enjoy learning together for a sustainable future in our diverse community. We aim to ensure everyone feels accepted, respected and safe by providing a tolerant, understanding and caring environment. We want everyone to do their very best in all that they do and we celebrate their successes individually and collectively.

The key aim of the Service is:

We aim to improve achievement and attainment, health and well-being for all pupils, students, service users and members of the community.

In particular we aspire to help pupils become:

- Successful learners.
- Confident individuals.
- Responsible citizens.
- Effective contributors.

## EDUCATION, LEISURE & HOUSING

### North Walls Community School

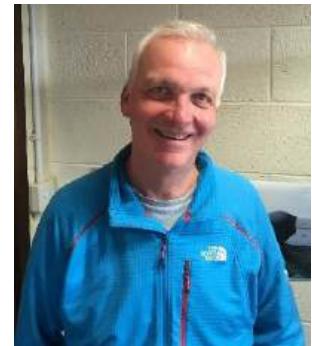
Lyness, Stromness, Orkney, KW16 3NX

Tel: (01856) 791246

Email: [admin.northwalls@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk](mailto:admin.northwalls@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk)



Head Teacher: Andy Trafford



### Welcome to North Walls Community School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to North Walls Community School.

This handbook gives an outline of the main features of life at North Walls and tells you about our school and its place in the community.

North Walls is a happy, safe, proactive establishment for your child, driven by our core value of Believe to Achieve. We believe that positive relationships with adults and children enable our children to make the most of their learning and enjoy school. We have high expectations of children engaging with their learning and being respectful to all within our school community.

We aim to create a happy school in which all children can learn and thrive in an atmosphere of shared responsibility, encouragement, mutual support and trust. We are committed to ensuring that children's needs are met and parents can be assured that children will settle quickly and comfortably into the school environment.

This handbook is designed to help in welcoming you to the North Walls School Community. Whilst I hope it is informative and useful it should not be seen as an alternative to personal communication. Your child's teacher is the first point of contact between home and school, but I too am happy to meet with you to discuss further aspects of your child's education, the school and the handbook. I encourage you to mention any concerns or worries as soon as possible so that we can work together to ensure your child is confident and happy.

We are proud of our school and island community. I hope you find this handbook clear and informative.

Please feel free to contact me should you further information regarding our wonderful school.

Yours sincerely,

*Andy Trafford*  
Head Teacher

## Overview of Handbook

### 1. Practical Information

This section provides you with some background information on our school and our nursery. It tells you how our school day and school year are made up and how to contact the school if, for example, your child is ill. This section deals with the practical aspects of your child's attendance at our school. It provides details on:

- Travelling to and from school.
- School meals.
- Financial assistance with school clothing, transport and school meals.
- School closures in an emergency or unexpectedly for any reason.
- General supervision available for your child in the morning and at lunch.
- Wet weather details.
- How the school and parents communicate with each other.
- How to make a compliment or a complaint to the school.
- How to give positive feedback.

### 2. Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is very important because we know it helps children do better in school. This section contains information about how parents can be involved in supporting learning at home as part of a home-school partnership. It also includes information on our Parent Council, how to contact them and how parents can get involved in the life and work of the school.

### 3. School Ethos

Ethos is a key aspect of how we see ourselves as a school in partnership with our parents and the wider community. This section covers the ethos of the school, what our values are and our aspirations for our pupils including how we celebrate pupil success, and the links we have with partner organisations and the wider local, national and international community.



#### **4. Curriculum**

This section describes how the curriculum is planned and delivered in the school including the range of subjects and subject areas your child will be learning. It includes information on how pupils develop skills for learning, life and work, including literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing in and out of the classroom.

As well as giving you information about the statutory curriculum requirements, we have included details on sports and outdoor activities available to pupils and the range of facilities available within the school. Details of how parents will be informed about sensitive aspects of learning e.g. relationships, sexual health, parenthood and drugs awareness are included as well as information about religious instruction and observance and arrangements for parents who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child.

#### **5. Transitions**

This section gives information about transition - from pre-school to primary and primary to secondary school - what the arrangements are and contact details of the catchment high school to which our pupils normally transfer. There are also details about making a placing request to another school.

#### **6. Support for Pupils**

This section gives information about how pupils' additional support needs will be identified and addressed, and the types of specialist services provided within our school. It also details who to contact for more information if you think your child has additional support needs.

#### **7. School Improvement**

This section gives you an overview of the main achievements of the school within the last 12 months and performance information relating to literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing.



## 1. Practical Information

### 1.1. Contacting the School

North Walls Community School  
Lyness  
Stromness  
KW16 3NX

- Telephone: 01856 791246 (answering machine available)
- Email: [admin.northwalls@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk](mailto:admin.northwalls@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk)
- Text: 07923032851
- Emergency No: 07923032851 / 01856 791210

### School Office

The school office is staffed from 9.30 am – 3.30 pm Monday, Wednesday & Thursday. Any visits to the school in person should be made through the main entrance where a buzzer with an intercom and magnetic lock system operates.

### Keeping Parents Informed

The school issues a weekly newsletter informing parents of current events and news of operations within school. We also have a school Facebook page which we use to keep all stakeholders informed of school news.  
<https://www.facebook.com/north.walls.58>

### 1.2. School Staffing

North Walls Community School is a non-denominational island school, funded by Orkney Islands Council. The school caters for nursery and primary school aged children, that is, pupils aged 2 to 12, and currently comprises of 2 classes and the nursery. The roll currently stands at 21 pupils; 5 in the nursery class, 10 in Class 1 (P1-4) and 6 in Class 2 (P5-7).

Head Teacher	Andy Trafford
Early Years Lead Practitioner	Claire Thomson
Class 2 Teacher	Saffron Thain
Class 1 Teacher	Stacy Johnston
Admin Assistant	Sarah Firth
Auxiliary	Isabelle Cannon
Janitor	Rachel Thomson
Technician	Trish Avis
Art	Marie Montgomery
Music	Kate Fletcher
Fiddle Instructor	Kate Fletcher
P.E. Teacher	Diane Currie
School Cook	Cassie Tulloch
School Cleaner	Lorraine Snow

### 1.3 Primary/Nursery Admissions

New entrants to P1 are enrolled early in the calendar year for entry to school in August. This is for children who will be five on or before the school start date in August. Those whose fifth birthday is between the **August start date** each year and the end of February the following year may also be admitted. Details of the enrolment dates are advertised in The Orcadian and on notices in school and the local shop.

Parents of children joining school classes during a school session will agree a start date following consultation with the Head Teacher. A visit to the school will usually take place. Any transfer information, including schoolwork, can be helpful in supporting your child's continued education. Records from other Orkney schools are automatically transferred internally but when the school is outwith the Authority, the school will contact the child's previous school to obtain the records.

### Nursery Admission in Orkney



Every child is entitled to a fully funded early learning and childcare place at the start of the term following their third birthday. All parents should submit an application form for their child, to the nursery of their choice during the admissions period. Nursery registration procedures are released by Education, Leisure and Housing Services by advertising in 'The Orcadian' in February. This is the first opportunity you have to register your child for a pre-school education place.

There are 12 places available in North Walls Community School Nursery. Places are allocated in accordance with Orkney Islands Council policy. Priority places may be given to children with additional support needs in accordance with the Additional Support for Learning Act 2006. Health & Social Services may identify these children and parents should complete the Additional Support Needs Information on the application form. These applications will then be taken to a multi-agency panel who consider each case in terms of need.

All Orkney nursery classes follow the Council's early years admissions policy. A funded pre-school nursery place is available for every child aged 3 to 5 years who lives in Orkney. Places can be provided either in a local authority nursery or with a recognised provider in the private and voluntary sector who have been accepted onto Orkney Islands Council's framework to provide pre-school education.

Children become eligible for pre-school education funding from the age of three. The start date depends on when your child becomes three.

You can apply for a nursery place by contacting the school in your local area directly or at Education, Leisure & Housing on 01856 873535 or emailing [education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk).

Further information can also be downloaded from the Council's website at:

[Early Learning and Childcare](#)

It is important that you make your application by the end of March for children aged three to five as all applications for pre-school places for the forthcoming school year (August to June) will be allocated in May. Some two-year-olds are also eligible for free early learning and childcare throughout Orkney. For more information on this please visit:

[Eligible Two Year Olds](#)

Children who attend our nursery classes are taught by appropriately qualified staff. All settings adhere to Care Inspectorate guidelines and standards. Nurseries are open to announced and unannounced inspections by this body. Children's early learning follows Curriculum for Excellence 3-18 guidance and principles and Building the Ambition national practice guidance on early learning and childcare.

**1.4 Term dates** for the following school year can be found on Orkney Islands Council's website. The direct link has term dates:

[school-calendar-2025-2026.pdf](#)

## **1.5 The School Day**

### **School Hours**

#### **Monday – Thursday**

9:15 – 10:30 am	First Session
10:30 – 10:50 am	Break
10:50 am – 12:30 pm	Second Session
12:30 – 1:10 pm	Dinner time
1:10 – 3:35 pm	Afternoon Session

**Friday:** as above except school closes at **2:00 pm.**

These times can be subject to change to accommodate itinerant timetables and other events/visitors. Playground supervision starts at 9:00 am. During playtime children are supervised by one or two adults. In addition, class teachers and the head teacher are on call to cope with any difficulties which may arise.

### **Nursery times**

North Walls Nursery offers up to 1140 hours of childcare per year for 3- and 4-year-olds and to eligible 2-year-olds. This equates to 30 hours per week during the school term.

#### **Nursery opening times:**

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday:	9:15 am – 2.15 pm
Tuesday:	9:15 am - 3:35 pm
Friday:	9.15 am – 2.00 pm

## First Aid

North Walls has a team of fully qualified first aiders. If a pupil is injured or unwell during school, they are cared for by a first aid trained member of staff. Parents are contacted to collect their children if necessary. Should a child receive a head bump, parents will be notified and receive written notification of the incident.



## 1.6 Attendance, Absences, and the Duty to Attend School

Please read the following Council guidelines issued by the Education Department concerning attendance and absence.

It is the responsibility of parents of a child of school age to make sure that their child is educated. Most do this by sending their child to school regularly. Attendance is recorded twice a day, morning and afternoon.

Absence from school is recorded as authorised, that is, approved by the education authority; or as unauthorised, that is, unexplained by the parent (truancy). Orkney Islands Council expect pupils to attend school at least 95% of sessions.

Please inform the school of any absence by telephone, e-mail or text message by **9.30 am**; all absences must be supported by written confirmation e.g. e-mail or note. If a child is absent with no explanation, the school aims to contact parents by 10.30 am on the day of absence to ensure that the child is safe.

Please make every effort to avoid family holidays during term time as this disrupts the child's education and reduces learning time. The head teacher can approve absence from school for a family holiday in certain extreme situations, for example, in traumatic domestic circumstances where the holiday would improve the cohesion and wellbeing of the family.

Please discuss your plans with the Head Teacher before the holiday. If the Head Teacher does not give permission before the holiday, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. The Head Teacher may exercise discretion when a parent can prove that work commitments make a family holiday impossible during school holiday times. Normally, your employer will need to provide evidence of your work commitments. Absence approved by the head teacher on this basis is regarded as authorised absence.

Parents from minority ethnic religious communities may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school to celebrate recognised religious events. Absence approved by the Head Teacher on this basis is regarded as authorised absence. Extended leave can also be granted on request for families returning to their country of origin for cultural or care reasons.

A supportive approach is taken to unexplained absence; however, the education authority has legal powers to write to, interview or prosecute parents, or refer pupils to the Reporter to the Children's Panel, if necessary.

National guidance on the management of attendance and absence in Scottish schools can be found at the following link:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/12/05100056/0>

### **1.7 School Dress Code**

There is no strict dress code but many of our pupils choose to wear our school hoody sweatshirt which bears the school logo. This is available from Logo Orkney in Kirkwall. Please ensure that all garments are clearly labelled with the child's name. Please also ensure that pupils come suitably dressed for the weather, as the school encourages outdoor play wherever possible.

A clothing allowance is a grant awarded to families on a low income to help towards the cost of clothing and footwear. This is paid once per academic year. The current clothing allowances are: £120 for primary children & £150 for secondary children. [School Meals and Clothing Allowances](#)



### **Clothing for Activities**

The appropriate clothing and footwear for PE is a T-shirt, shorts/leggings, and gym shoes with non-marking soles. If a child has long hair, it should be tied back. These are necessary for health and safety reasons and your co-operation is requested to ensure that pupils are equipped to participate in the PE lessons.

Please ensure that all items of clothing are clearly labelled; particularly sweatshirts and PE clothing which are easily lost. Please help the school and the education authority by making sure that pupils do not bring valuable or expensive items of clothing to school.

The wearing of jewellery is discouraged. If a child has pierced ears, then studs only may be worn.

In certain circumstances, appropriate clothing and footwear will be necessary for school trips and extra-curricular activities. The school provides pupils with waterproof clothing and wellies for when they take part in outdoor activities.

If you have any queries regarding the school's dress code, please contact the head teacher.

## 1.8 School Catering



All schools in Orkney provide subsidised meals, either prepared in-house or, in some cases, at a neighbouring school. Our school provides meals prepared at the school. Orkney's school meals service aims to provide children with a high quality and varied diet. Copies of the menus are available from the school and on the website.

For more information on catering provision please contact the school directly.

## 1.9 School Meals at North Walls

School meals at North Walls are prepared daily in the school kitchen by our School Cook and eaten in the dining hall.

A hot two course meal costs £3.70 for primary pupils daily and should be paid for weekly in advance. Cheques should be made payable to 'OIC School Meals'. Online payments can be made using iPayimpact, where meal choices are selected as well.

The food is very healthy and wholesome, and the children can have a great variety in a week. Each day there is home-made soup and a hot main course or a hot main course and a pudding. Alternatively, there is a salad bar or baked potatoes with a choice of fillings, and a choice of fruit or yoghurt instead of the pudding. Salad, water and milk are always available with the meal. Vegetarian options are available every day.

Pupils who require medically prescribed or modified diets, with parental/guardian assistance, should be identified during the admission process.

### Packed Lunch

When children bring a packed lunch to school, parents are responsible for ensuring that lunch box contents are stored at the correct temperature, by including an ice pack where necessary. The school aims to encourage young people to enjoy food which is both attractive to them and nutritionally sound whether this is a school meal, a packed lunch, or a snack. We would appreciate your support in achieving this aim.

## 1.10 Free School Meals & Clothing Allowance

All children in P1-5 and nursery have the option of a school meal free of charge. Children in P1-5/nursery who wish to take a packed lunch may still do so. This does not apply to children in Primary 6-7 who should continue to pay for meals. Some children in P6-7, however, may be entitled to a free school meal. Additionally, new this year (19 February), families receiving the Scottish Child Payment are now eligible for free school meals for their P6 and P7 pupils.

A clothing allowance is a grant awarded to families on a low income to help towards the cost of clothing and footwear. This is paid once per academic year. The current clothing allowances are: £120 for primary children & £150 for secondary children.

By applying for free school meals and clothing not only will your child be receiving nutritional benefits, but you will also be supporting their school. For every eligible pupil that is registered for free school meals, their school will receive funding through the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF). This funding can be used to support a wide range of initiatives and can help those who experience barriers to learning. We strongly encourage all parents who may be eligible for free school meals & clothing to apply for them.

Applications for Free School Meals and Clothing Allowance are made on one form and should be submitted to Orkney Islands Council for each school year.

The eligibility criteria are outlined on the following webpage, where applications can be made online: [School Meals and Clothing Allowances](#)

Application forms can also be obtained from the school and Orkney Islands Council (OIC) Customer Services. Applications must be submitted along with supporting documentation as detailed on the form. A new application is required for each school year. For help with filling out the form and more information on school meals and clothing grants please telephone Education, Housing and Leisure on (01856) 873535, or email: [education.grants@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:education.grants@orkney.gov.uk)

### Playtime snack

Pupils should bring a snack from home to eat at morning break. Fizzy drinks are not permitted in school. As a health promoting school, we encourage healthy options. Children should not share their snack with others in the playground as they may inadvertently cause another child to have an allergic reaction.

### Breakfast

We know that hungry children are less effective learners. There are times when, for many reasons children might miss breakfast and we do not judge. At North Walls children may request breakfast upon arrival. This is run independently from OIC catering, being supported by the Graemsay, Hoy & Walls Community Council.

## 1.11 School Transport

Orkney Islands Council provides school transport for pupils who live outwith walking distance, and the provision is described in the Authority's School Transport Policy.

Free transport is provided by OIC for pupils who live on the island (the school catchment area). The school transport provider is Albert Clark (Hoy) & Adam Clark (Longhope). For pick up/drop off times, telephone 791 315. Full details of the authority's School Transport including entitlement, catchment areas, collection / drop off points, code of conduct and provision for pupils with additional support needs is available on the following webpage: [School Transport](#)

## 1.12 Travel to and from School

Bus transport to North Walls is provided by a single operator with 2 buses.

**A & F Clark, Quoydale, Hoy. 01856 791 315**

Parents should remind their child(ren) that, in the interests of safety, good behaviour is expected from all pupils travelling on school transport. All children at North Walls receive a high-viz vest to wear to and from school.

## 1.13 Transport for Nursery Children

There is normally no provision of transport by the local authority for nursery age children.

## 1.14 School Security

Orkney Islands Council has procedures to ensure the safety and security of pupils and staff when attending or working in a school. We use several security measures including a visitors' book and badges while visitors are within the school building and an intercom/magnetic locking system on the front door. Keypad locks are also used on other entry doors in the building. Normally, anyone calling at a school for any reason will be asked to report to the school office. The school staff then can make the necessary arrangements for the visitor.

## 1.15 Adverse Weather Arrangements

In adverse weather conditions pupils remain inside the school building during breaks. We have an assortment of wet weather activities for them to enjoy.

## 1.16 Parental Consultation

We offer opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers through arranged meetings. All parents will be advised of when these occasions are. Over and above set meetings, parents are welcome to contact the school to ask for information or for a meeting. Please see section two of this handbook for more details on home / school partnership.

## 1.17 Communication with Home

From time to time your child will bring home important and routine communications from the school. Parents are encouraged to check their child's schoolbag for these communications. Parents, who check their e-mails daily, may choose this electronic form of communication. Enquiries regarding schoolwork should be addressed to the class teacher in the first instance.

TAPESTRY is used to record and share learning experiences in the classroom with parents and carers at home. Each child has their own profile where they can share their achievements by uploading photos, recordings, and drawings.

Parents and carers are invited to join TAPESTRY and will be notified when there are new posts to view. This is a great way of engaging with your child's learning as you can comment on your children's work.

## 1.18 Unexpected / Severe Weather Closures and Transport Disruption



There can be a few winter days where the weather causes disruption to schools and school transport. It is important to ensure that the school has your up-to-date contact details to inform you of any closures during the school day. Information on school closures and transport disruption can be obtained as follows:

**Early morning:**

- OIC School Transport Facebook page is available; this may be your first stop for information on school closures and transport changes.
- The Facebook page and Twitter feed are both updated as soon as information is available. This can be as early as 6.30am to assist isles daily travellers in planning their travel. Information and links to these sites are available at: [OIC Updates](#)
- School closure information is passed to BBC Radio Orkney and broadcast on its programme at 7.30am (93.7 FM). Radio Orkney will be notified if there is disruption to transport and / or school closures. However detailed information on specific routes is not always provided.
- Information on school closures and transport disruption is also provided on the OIC answer phone (01856 873535) outwith office hours.

**Throughout the school day:**

- We contact parents directly if the school is closing or transport is running early.
- Local media (Radio Orkney, The Orcadian) will also be notified of any disruption during the day.

**1.19 Use of Electronic Devices, Including Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones should not be brought to North Walls Community School without good reason. In these occasions, the child should give the phone to the class teacher on arrival at the school, and then collect it again immediately prior to departure.

Children should not bring to school any other electronic equipment without special permission e.g. iPods, iPads, kindles etc.

**1.20 Equality**

Orkney Islands Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities, challenging discrimination and fostering good relations, both in employment and in carrying out its work and delivering services, and we at North Walls Community School are part of that commitment.

The Council is a member of Orkney Community Planning Partnership. The Partnership has developed an Equality and Diversity Strategy which determines how the community planning partners promote equality and diversity in the work they do. It also sets out how the public agencies and organisations within the Partnership are meeting their duties in terms of equality and diversity legislation, the needs of the local community and the aspirations contained in the Orkney Community Plan.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single equality duty covering the nine protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The equality duty requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across the protected characteristics. The message of the Act is that everyone has the right to be treated fairly, whether at work or when using services.

Education, Leisure and Housing has policies and statements to address equalities issues specific to education to enable us to fulfil these legal duties. All schools have copies of these policies.

## **1.21 English as an Additional Language**

The Authority provides a support service to teachers who offer information and advice to address the needs of pupils learning in their second language.

## **1.22 Complaints, Comments and Suggestions Procedure**

Orkney Islands Council Education Service is keen that you should be completely satisfied about your child's education, so we at North Walls encourage feedback on our services from parents and pupils. We are, therefore, interested in feedback of all kinds, compliments, suggestions or complaints. If you want to register a comment of any type about the school you can do this by writing, e-mailing, telephoning or making an appointment to see someone. All feedback is welcome and keeps us in touch.

If you have a complaint about the school, please let us know. It is better that these things are shared openly and resolved fairly, rather than being allowed to damage the relationship between the family and the school. There will be no negative consequences arising from making a complaint and we will deal with the issue as confidentially as possible. If we have made a mistake we will apologise quickly and clearly and try to put things right.

There are some things which you should take note of in relation to making a complaint:

- Please make any complaints initially to the head teacher. This makes sure that the school knows what is going on and has an opportunity to respond to and resolve the issue.
- We will try to respond as quickly as possible, but often issues are complex and we need time to investigate.
- If you are still unhappy with the service or with our response then you have the right to take the matter further using the Orkney Islands Council complaints procedure. You can put your complaint in writing or fill in a complaint form, available in the school or any council office. We can help if you have difficulty with this. Completed forms should be sent to: Complaints Officer, Education, Leisure and Housing, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall KW15 1NY or email [education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk)
- If you are still unhappy after the further investigation and reply, you can take the matter up with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman; our reply will include the contact details.
- You should also note that you have the right to raise unresolved concerns with your local councillor, MSP or MP.

## **1.23 School Policies**

School policies will be available on our website [http://www.orkney.co.uk/northwalls/?page\\_id=223](http://www.orkney.co.uk/northwalls/?page_id=223) which is in the process of being populated and paper copies can be viewed at the school.



## 1.24 School Health Service

Orkney Health and Care provides an Orkney-wide school health service to all school-age children and young people, to promote their health and wellbeing, and to provide them with information to make informed decisions on lifestyle choices. Our aim is that children and young people are as healthy as possible so they can gain the most benefit from their education, and that they will make healthy choices and therefore reduce the incidence of ill health in the future.

The service undertakes routine screening and is involved with child protection, health surveillance, health promotion and education, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination and 1:1 support and advice. It can help any parents with parenting, through the Triple P Positive Parenting Programme, and help children and young people overcome bedwetting.

It also provides advice and support to education staff and deliver training on many health conditions that impact on childhood e.g. asthma, epilepsy and allergies. It supports and coordinates paediatric clinics and acts as a link between consultants and parents / carers and children.

The School Nurse Team covers all schools in Orkney and comprises a public health nurse (specialist practitioner), registered nurse and healthcare support worker who are based in the School Health Department at the Kirkwall Health Centre Annex. Pupils, parents / carers can request information and advice at any time. Other health professionals and teaching staff can also request advice and input from the school nurse for a child with parental and / or the young person's consent.

- Health screening - All children in P1 and P7 will be seen in order to have their growth and vision checked.
- Health Education and Promotion-The School Health Team has an important role in encouraging healthy lifestyles, working closely with teaching staff, pupils, parents and carers, and the community.
- Childsmile Dental – checks, fluoride varnishing. Toothbrushing is done in school daily.

The School Health Service can be contacted on 01856 888 279 and Childsmile on 888 262.

## 1.25 Infectious Diseases

Colds, flu and gastroenteritis are the most common infections affecting children of school age. **It is important that you keep your child off school if they are unwell, and for 48 hours after they stop vomiting or diarrhoea.**

It is also important that your child understands how to prevent picking up and spreading such infections. Good, effective hand washing is the one easy solution to preventing the spread of germs. You will be able to get further advice about good health from staff in your health centre or GP practice.

For advice about early detection and treatment for other infectious diseases e.g. chickenpox and mumps, please consult your GP or nurse.

### **Covid-19**

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and you have a high temperature or are too unwell to carry out normal activities, stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until you no longer have a high temperature (if you had one) or until you no longer feel unwell.

Children and young people aged 18 and under with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat or a slight cough, who are otherwise well, do not need to stay at home and can continue to attend education settings.

Children and young people should only stay at home if they are unwell and have a high temperature. They can go back to school and resume normal activities when they no longer have a fever and they feel well enough to attend. For further information, please see: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19>

### **1.26 Head Lice**

Head lice are spread through head-to-head contact at home, while playing, or in school. Wet combing of your child's hair using a head-lice detection comb is the best way to detect and treat at an early stage and prevent the spread of head lice to family members and to other children and adults. Checking for head lice by wet combing should become a normal weekly routine.

The only way to be sure that your child has head lice is to find a live louse. If you find live lice, get the correct lotion from your doctor or pharmacist. One treatment is two applications of the treatment lotion, seven days apart. If this is not followed, then re-infection is likely.

Advice family members and close friends that your child has head lice and that they should check their own hair. Only treat if live lice are found. Don't be shy about advising others of this possible problem, as you would tell family and friends about other infections which might affect them. Further advice can be obtained from the Health Board head lice leaflet which is available in all schools and health centres. If you would like to discuss your particular concerns, you could speak to your GP.

### **1.27 Medicine Administration and Medical Appointments**



If pupils require medication to be administered at school, parents must contact the school office and complete a standard form stating the name of the medication, dosage, time of administration and

permission for staff to supervise. School staff can only administer medicine that parents provide. The medicine form is available on the school website. [Downloadable Forms – North Walls Community School](#) For medical appointments during school hours, please notify the school by letter/email and collect your child from the school.

### **Asthma Inhalers**

Parents of children who carry their own inhalers should supply a spare named inhaler just in case your child's inhaler is lost or misplaced. All children who have asthma have a management plan.

### **1.28 Insurance Cover for School Children**

A copy of the Orkney Islands Council Summary of Insurance is available from the school office.

## **2 Parental Involvement**

### **2.1 Parents as Welcome Participants in their Children's Education**

At North Walls we welcome parents as active participants in the life of the school, to be intrinsically involved with their child's education and learning, and to express their views on the school education generally and work in partnership with us. Children are shown to be more successful learners when parents involve themselves with their child's learning and the school. North Walls celebrates pupil learning with parents and pupils, using Tapestry, the school newsletter and the school website.

To encourage and support parents, North Walls aims to develop opportunities for parents to come to sessions on developments in the school and the curriculum, and to support parents to become active in school activities. The views of the Parent Forum are sought annually as part of the quality assurance process, through questionnaires.

Parents are welcomed to:

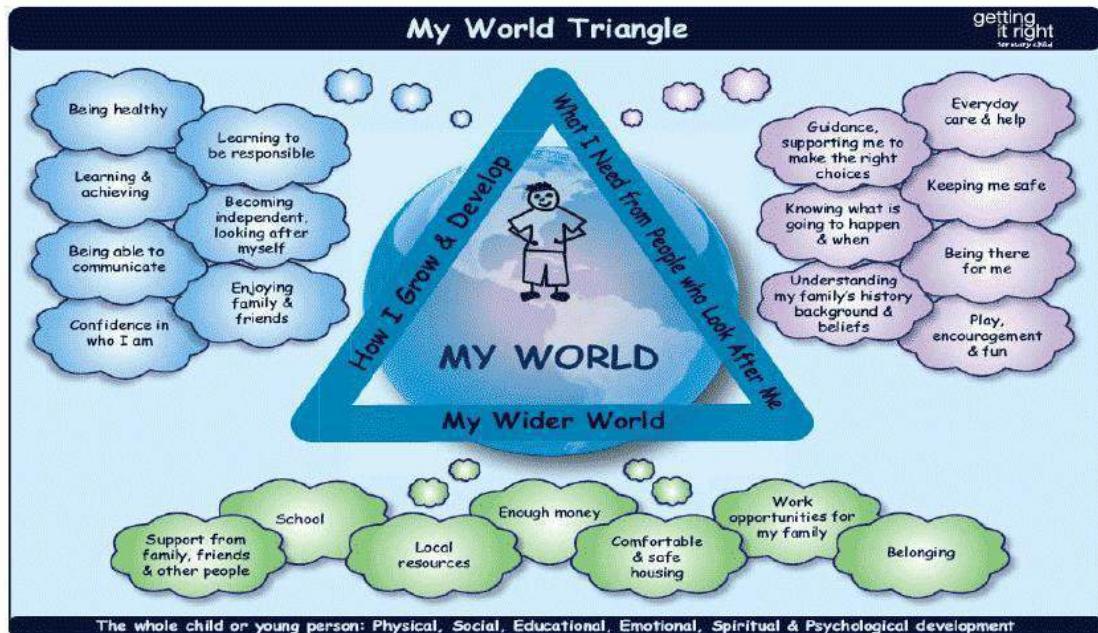
- Be involved with their child's education and learning.
- Be active participants in the life of the school.
- Express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with their children's schools.

### **2.2 Parent Councils**

Parent Councils are the formal representative body for parents and carers with children attending school.

As a parent of a child in school you automatically become a member of the Parent Forum, and if you wish, you can have greater involvement by becoming a member of the Parent Council, which works together with everyone involved in school life to support the school. The Parent Council meets once a term, with additional meetings when there are special events.

Parents and families are children's first teachers and make a real difference to children's learning - when parents are involved children do better and achieve more. The range of support a child requires is demonstrated in the 'My World triangle' below, showing how all aspects of a child's life is important to ensure each child develops fully.



As automatic members of the Parent Forum, all parents can expect to:

- Receive information about the school and its activities.
- Hear about what partnership with parents means in our school.
- Be invited to be involved in ways and times that suit you.
- Identify issues you want the Parent Council to work on with the school.
- Be asked your opinion by the Parent Council on issues relating to the school and the education it provides.
- Work in partnership with staff.
- Enjoy taking part in the life of the school in whatever way possible.

The Parent Forum decides how its representatives on the Parent Council are chosen and how the Parent Council operates. Parents and carers are encouraged to volunteer or put themselves forward to be chosen as representatives on the Parent Council if they wish.

The main aims of the Parent Council are to:

- Support the school in its work with pupils.
- Represent the views of parents.
- Promote contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community.
- Report to the Parent Forum.
- Be involved in the appointment of senior promoted staff.
- Raise funds for the school for the benefit of pupils.

For more information about our Parent Council please contact the current chair, Sarah Firth, email: [nwcs.parentcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:nwcs.parentcouncil@gmail.com)

For more information on parental involvement and to find out about parents as partners in their children's learning, please contact the school or visit the Parentzone website at [www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk). Information on parental involvement is also available on Orkney Islands Council's website through the following link: [Parental Involvement](#)

The National Parent Forum of Scotland is the national organisation for Parent Councils, and each local authority has a representative on the Forum. For further information about this please contact Education, Leisure and Housing by telephoning (01856) 873535 or emailing [education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk).

More details can be found at: <http://www.parentforumscotland.org/>  
<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/getting-involved/>

### **2.3 Pupil Council**

The Pupil Council will meet with the Head Teacher to discuss ideas, decide on the most effective ways to change and improve the school and then talk to the people who can help to make it happen. The Pupil Council will regularly share news and information about new initiatives and the important things which are achieved. Together the help North Walls Community School to continue to grow and succeed.

#### **Aims:**

1. To allow the children at North Walls Community School to have a voice.
2. To help the school and community be a better place.
3. To help to improve learning in the school.
4. To raise funds for the school and charities

#### **Members:**

The Pupil Council will be made up of representatives from all year groups.

#### **Officers:**

Once elected on to the Pupil Council as board members, children will be able to apply for specific job roles within the organisation.

- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer

#### **Elections:**

Elections will be run without prejudice or discrimination. Any class member is entitled to run for Pupil Council and the decision will be made by a secret ballot undertaken by all pupils. Children who wish to run for election are asked to create a poster of themselves and present this to the whole school.

#### **Pupil Council Rules:**

All Pupil Council members must:

- be respectful and listen to others
- contribute or participate actively in meetings
- follow the school rules and be role models to other pupils
- model good behaviour at all times
- be polite and courteous to others
- not refer to specific individuals or groups during discussions
- use their position on Pupil Council to support and develop their school and peers.

#### **Meetings:**

The Head Teacher and Pupil Council members will take part in a working lunch meeting every fortnight. Officers of the council will report to their respective classes on discussion points/decisions.

## 3 School Ethos

### 3.1 Vision Statement



The vision of all in the North Walls community is **Believe to Achieve**. We want all the children to have the skills, self-esteem and resilience to have the confidence to undertake any opportunity.

### 3.2 Aims

Our aim is to provide consistently high-quality learning experiences, value the learning and achievements of all our children and promote high expectations and ambition to enable them to achieve their potential. We aim to support our pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need to do well in life, in learning and in the workplace.

- We aim to provide a **nurturing and trusting** environment in which everyone feels **safe, included and happy**.
- We aim to support everyone to **achieve** their potential and be the best they can be.
- We aim to encourage **active, healthy** lifestyles.
- We aim to encourage our learners to be **mindful and resilient**.
- We aim to promote **respect** and **responsibility** so everyone's rights are met.
- Through **teamwork** and communication between staff, parents and pupils we aim to develop positive relationships amongst all members of the school community.

Each day at North Walls we aim to encourage all the children in our care to do as well as they can. We use the North Walls SMARTS to promote achievement for all.

### 3.3 School Values

Our SMART Values:

**Safety & Happiness**

**Mindful Learners**

**Achievement for All**

**Reflection & Respect**

**Teamwork & Trust**



### 3.4 Positive Behaviour Management

Positive Behaviour Management is a vital component in helping North Walls Community School to achieve its aims and values. Our Positive Behaviour Management Policy also provides our pupils with the boundaries and rules that they need to fulfil their potential and contribute to the wellbeing of others.

The general aim of the school is to provide an atmosphere of mutual respect and collective responsibility. Pupils, parents and teachers all have an important part to play in achieving this atmosphere. The rules of the school are of a common-sense nature, bearing in mind the interest and safety of all concerned. In addition to these we use Reflection Cards and teach Zones of Regulation.

### 3.5 School Rules

The Safety Rule - We will try to keep ourselves and others safe.

The Learning Rule - We will be ready to learn and will try our best.

The Respect Rule - We will be kind to people and look after property.

The Inclusion Rule - We will include everyone.

The Communication Rule - We will listen well and speak positively.

The Health and Well Being Rule - We will try to make healthy choices as we look after our minds and bodies.

### 3.6 Bullying

Bullying may be defined as a range of pre-meditated, persistent and often deliberate actions, undertaken by a person or a group of people, which cause the victim(s) physical or emotional distress.

It may be useful at this point to draw a distinction between acts of bullying and incidents which, although not to be encouraged, are commonplace when groups of children play together. An occasional tussle or quarrel between two children will be treated as a breach of discipline by staff, but it is **not** bullying. Similarly, reciprocal or casual name-calling is not to be condoned, but it is **not** bullying. **Sustained victimisation** is. The crucial distinction is where the imbalance of power is such that the victim clearly needs positive support. At the same time the bully needs to be made aware of the damage, which his/her actions are causing.

Bullying is described to pupils as **STOP:**

Several  
Times  
On  
Purpose

The school is opposed to all forms of bullying behaviour, be this physical, verbal, online, threatening and intimidating behaviour or ostracism from groups, games or activities, and we will do everything in our power to prevent such behaviour amongst our pupils, and to deal effectively with any incidents which might occur. Victims of bullying are supported by a range of strategies and resources depending upon the needs of the child and the nature of the incidents.

However, please be reassured that incidents of bullying in North Walls Community School are few and far between. We believe that a strong, positive school ethos and constant work on building a caring school community, together with close contact with parents, offer the best way forward. In cases of bullying, the parents of both parties involved will be contacted immediately.

### **3.7 Restorative Approach to Bullying Behaviour**

Whilst many believe that children who bully must be punished for their behaviour, it is widely accepted that this type of response can at times be ineffective, dangerous, breeds resentment and can make the situation worse.

Punishment can make a person resentful instead of reflective. Children who bully must be given the opportunity to hear about and face up to the pain, hurt, distress and anger they have caused to others. Punishment does not help to restore relationships and can result in further retaliation.

Orkney Islands Council has a responsibility to protect those being bullied but also to provide an education for all pupils including children who bully or those with behavioural problems. Whilst appropriate action will be taken by the school, it is also important that all parents involved, work with the school to resolve the problems in the best interests of their child or young person.

### **3.8 Exclusion**

Where pupils who repeatedly display behaviours which compromise the good order of the school i.e. disruption of learning and teaching, unsafe practices, bullying and other forms of abuse and where other forms of support and sanctions have proved unsuccessful, the authority exclusion policy will apply.

### **3.9 Equality at North Walls**

North Walls passionately adheres to the Equality Act 2010 which requires all schools, nurseries and in Scotland to protect pupils from discrimination and work towards increasing equality of opportunity.

This law sets out a list of characteristics that have special protection from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

It is against the law to discriminate against pupils because of the following 'protected characteristics':

- Disability
- Gender reassignment (no changes, medical treatment or assessment need to have taken place for a transgender pupil to be included in this category)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (skin colour, ethnic origin, cultural background, or nationality)
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

Discrimination includes:

- Direct discrimination - treating a pupil less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- Indirect discrimination - where a policy or practice is applied in the same way for every pupil, but it puts pupils with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage.

It is also against the law to discriminate against a pupil due to the protected characteristics of someone they are associated with, like a family member or friend.

The law also protects pupils who people might think have a protected characteristic, whether or not they do. The Equality Act also puts a duty on local authorities to work towards:

- Getting rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic, and people who do not.
- Promoting good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and people who do not.

This means that North Walls actively promotes the inclusion of all pupils in all aspects of school life. We also take positive action to help particular groups of pupils overcome disadvantages that are linked to a protected characteristic.



## 4 School Curriculum

### 4.1 Curriculum for Excellence

#### Principles for Curriculum Design

Schools and learning communities in Orkney apply the principles for curriculum design that are drawn from National advice but reflect our unique Orkney context. These principles are:

- Challenge and enjoyment in learning
- Breadth of learning
- Progression in learning
- Depth of learning
- Personalisation and choice e.g. in how to present learning
- Coherence (with other areas of learning)
- Relevance of learning



## Curriculum Entitlements

The following entitlements are also provided for all pupils in Orkney Schools:

- A cohort curriculum from 3 to 18.
- A broad general education, including well planned experiences and outcomes across all the curriculum areas. This should include understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it and understanding of the environment.
- A senior phase which provides opportunities for study for qualifications and other planned opportunities for developing the four capacities.
- Opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.
- Opportunities to achieve to the highest levels they can through appropriate personal support and challenge.
- Opportunities to move into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

Learners are provided with a broad, balanced set of experiences designed around the curriculum areas of:

- Expressive Arts
- Languages and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Health & Wellbeing
- Religious and Moral education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

The core curriculum consists of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Well-Being. These subjects permeate all other curricular areas. Attainment and Achievement in these areas are regularly assessed and reviewed annually by the school to ensure standards are maintained or improved.

Learners are given opportunities to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work with a continuous focus on:

- Enterprise and Creativity
- Citizenship and International Education
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Health & Wellbeing
- Sustainable Development
- Digital Technology

## Curriculum for Excellence is structured into different levels.

Early	The pre-school years and P1, or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
Third	S1 to S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly equates to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4.
Fourth	The fourth level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programmes will not include all of the fourth level outcomes.
Senior	S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

### 4.2 Learning and Teaching

Our teaching approaches recognise and reflect that each child is an individual with their own aspirations and aptitudes. We aim to develop each child to their full potential and to cater for a range of learning styles.

We believe in active learning for all pupils at all stages with children fully engaged in thinking. In promoting active learning, we recognise the importance of ensuring that learning experiences are stimulating and challenging.

We make full use of the local environment, including local businesses. Our aim is to make learning relevant and meaningful and to promote enthusiasm for life-long learning.

Not all pupils do the same work at the same time; within any class the teacher will regularly plan tasks that are set at different levels of difficulty according to the carefully identified and agreed next steps for each pupil.



### 4.3 Assessment & Reporting

Teachers carry out continuous assessment as part of their daily practice to ensure that learning activities are meeting the needs of their pupils and extending and developing learning. Assessment results are used to track pupils' progress, inform planning, direct future learning and teaching activities and for reporting purposes.

The overall purpose of assessment is to support learning. Staff at North Walls use a variety of formative assessment techniques in teaching the children how they can improve upon their current strategies of work. This applies to all pupils, regardless of ability and ensures that opportunities to progress and achieve are fair and inclusive.

Formative Assessment includes:

- Sharing learning intentions, success criteria, ideas and expectations.

- Promoting creative thinking skills by using quality questioning techniques.
- Giving constructive feedback to pupils which is focused on improvement.

Children are also encouraged to self and peer assess and recognise their own strengths and learning needs. Once learning needs are identified, children are involved in planning their own future learning. In addition to this, teachers set realistically challenging targets for their pupils, helping to ensure that the pace of children's learning is appropriate.

More formal assessments are also carried out to confirm teachers' professional judgement about learning. These include summative assessment, diagnostic assessment and the use of appropriate national assessment resources. Scottish schools use SNSA (Scottish National Standardised Assessment). The Scottish Government commissioned the SNSA as part of the National Improvement Framework. We also use SOFA assessments (Scottish Online Formative Assessment) in certain year groups. In addition to these we assess reading termly and spelling twice a year, both to monitor progress and intervene if required.

Formal assessment structure:

P1: SNSA  
 P2: SOFA, spelling & reading  
 P3: SOFA, spelling & reading  
 P4: SNSA, spelling & reading  
 P5: SOFA, spelling & reading  
 P6: SOFA, spelling & reading  
 P7: SNSA, spelling & reading

These assessments provide teachers objective and nationally consistent information on children's progress in aspects of literacy and numeracy, alongside a wide range of other assessment activity. Teachers can then discuss children's progress with them and their parents, taking into account the full range of assessment activity, including SNSA, to plan next steps and ensuring parents understand how best to support their child's learning at home. For children and young people to have the best chance of reaching their potential, parents, carers, teachers and the children themselves need to understand how they are progressing and what further support they require.

During parent-teacher meetings, information will be shared about children's strengths, development needs and next steps in learning. Parents will also be given ideas about supporting their children's learning at home. School reports are sent home in June of each year. Parents and pupils are invited to add their comments to these reports.

#### **4.4 Educational Visits**

We offer various educational visits during the school year. We believe that 'hands on' experiences greatly enhance a child's education, while also helping to make the necessary links between learning in school and life out with school. Staff members and parent volunteers provide supervision to standards laid down by Orkney Islands Council. We give parents as much notification as possible about visits that affect their child.

P6 pupils have a 3-day Outdoor Education programme, based from North Walls. P7 pupils can attend a 5-day residential based at Hoy Outdoor Centre, this usually takes place in Term 4.

#### **4.5 1+2 Approach to Language Learning**

The Scottish Government has introduced a policy 'Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach'. Children are growing up in a multilingual world and to allow them to take their place as global citizens; they need to be able to communicate in many settings.

The approach is inclusive and entitles all children and young people to learn new languages. All language learning is important and will be recognised and celebrated as an achievement.

By beginning language learning early there will be more time to develop learner's language skills and knowledge of language so that they will have a greater understanding of how languages work as they go through school.

In Orkney the first foreign language will be French. In North Walls, French will be delivered using the Camembear Programme from P1-4 and the Mr French Programme for P5-7. Class 2 pupils learn German as part of the 1 + 2 approach.

We are committed to this new approach to language learning because learning languages can play an important role in helping young people to develop their literacy skills, including literacy in their first language, whether this is English or another language. Through languages, learners have opportunities to:

- develop and improve their skills in listening, talking, reading and writing.
- get a feeling for how languages work.
- learn how to communicate ideas and information in their own language as well as in the new languages they learn.
- become familiar with different texts and media in different languages.
- develop skills which will help them further with learning, life and work.

#### **4.6 Homework**

Homework is given to support and reinforce pupils' learning. All homework tasks should be capable of completion within 30-40 minutes depending on stage. Homework should be handed in on time, neatly written and completed to the best of the child's ability. The completion of homework is optional.

If parents have any concerns about their child's ability to complete the homework assignment, they should alert the class teacher who will contact the parent to discuss the matter.

Parents should be made aware that homework should not become a source of conflict between parent and child and that if, for whatever reason please let your child's class teacher know. Teachers will continually evaluate their homework practice.

#### **4.7 Extra-Curricular Activities**

At North Walls we rely upon the goodwill of staff and the support of parents in running after school clubs. Information regarding current clubs (including those led by Active Schools) and extra-curricular activities will be communicated throughout the year via the weekly newsletter.

#### 4.8 Instrumental Tuition



From Primary 4 onwards, fiddle tuition is available from a tutor.

#### 4.9 Care of Books / Materials

To enable us to provide the best possible education for your child, every care should be taken to look after the school's resources and facilities. Parents are asked to remind their child(ren) that all school equipment and fitments should be used with care.

Books and learning resources which are lost or destroyed must be paid for, either wholly or in part, depending on the age of the book. Any loss of school or Council property should be reported immediately to the school.

#### 4.10 Sensitive Aspects of Learning

Relationships education can be defined as a lifelong process whereby children and young people acquire knowledge and skills, and develop beliefs, attitudes and values about their sexuality and relationships within a moral and ethical framework.

Children learn about relationships, sexual health and parenthood from a wide range of sources including formal education, parents and families, friends and the media. North Walls uses the RSHP relationships programme, which is taught throughout the school at age-appropriate levels. Parents are notified prior to the teaching programme starting, and materials can be seen. Children at this stage are also informed about drugs and their effects, older children are also taught about menstruation and how we help here at North Walls.

#### 4.11 Swimming

Our swimming provision is under review whilst maintenance is being carried out at the North Walls Centre pool.



#### 4.12 Religious and Moral Education

Throughout the school there are opportunities for pupils to learn about aspects of Christianity, Other World Faiths, and to reflect upon their own moral standpoint in relation to world issues. During whole-school assemblies, we encourage awareness of matters of a cultural, social and moral nature.

We aim to develop in our pupils an ethos of tolerance, understanding and respect for the beliefs and customs of others. The school is committed to supporting the development of its pupils as whole people and as a result, wish to encourage their development in moral, social and cultural terms.

The key human aspects of learning are supported by:

- Creating an atmosphere that is both caring and challenging and which provides opportunities for the development of personal responsibility.
- Promoting social and moral learning through the way in which disciplinary issues are handled.
- Ensuring staff and adults within the school provide positive models for pupils.
- Arranging regular gatherings of the school community and using such occasions to encourage and reinforce the values on which the school is based.
- Enriching the curriculum in all appropriate areas with an emphasis on moral, social and cultural development.
- Providing opportunities within the curriculum to advance personal and social development.
- Providing a programme of religious education.
- Providing a programme of moral education.
- Taking every opportunity to acknowledge value and appreciate the various cultures and heritage of our pupils and to encourage them to appreciate and value the cultures and heritage of others including visits by representatives of other beliefs or faiths.

The school enjoys visits from Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, Minister South Ronaldsay and Burry Parish Church, Interim Moderator Hoy and Walls Parish and Church Chaplain in Ordinary to HM the King to lead assemblies as a valued member of the Hoy community.

Parents wishing to exercise their right to withdraw their child from Religious and Moral Education should contact the Head Teacher so that acceptable alternative arrangements can be made.

## 5 Transition

### 5.1 Transfer from Nursery to Primary

Before leaving nursery, a transfer of information record for each child will be prepared by nursery staff to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of education for the child transferring to primary.

### 5.2 Primary School Admissions and Deferrals

In Orkney, as in all Scotland, there is one intake to primary school that takes place in the August of each year. Children born between the beginning of March and the end of the following February are eligible to start primary school in the August when they will be between 4.5 and 5.5 years old.

Children born between March and August must start school in the August after they become five. However, if your child is not five at the start of the school term in August they have the option of deferring their entry to school until the following August.

Some parents / carers therefore, have a choice as to when their child starts primary school. Taking the choice to delay school enrolment for a year is known as deferred entry. This choice takes place when your child will be starting Primary One, not when they are going into their pre-school year.

#### Deferred entry to Primary School

In Scotland, there is one intake to Primary School in August of each year. Children born between the beginning of March and the end of the following February are able to start primary school in the August when they will be between 4.5 and 5.5 years old.

If your child is five years old on or between 1 March and the first day of school term, Tuesday 19 August 2025, your child will start school this August.

If your child is five years old on or between Wednesday 20 August 2025 and the last day of February 2026, your child can start school on 19 August 2025. However, you have the option to defer your child's entry to school.

From August 2023, a change in legislation means that all children who are eligible to defer, as above, will automatically be able to access an additional year of funded Early Learning and Childcare.



#### How to decide what's best for your child?

Choosing to defer when your child starts primary school is a big decision.

Before you make your mind up, it's worth finding out a bit more about how primary one has changed over the last few years. Much of the learning in the early stages of primary school are based on play. This helps create a smooth transition for children moving from early learning and childcare into primary one.

Speak to your early learning and childcare manager or head teacher who will be able to give support and advice to help you make your decision. Further information about deferred entry can be found via the Parent Club Scotland website.

When beginning Primary 1, your child will normally attend their local primary school and transfer from it, after Primary 7, to its associated secondary school. Details of the catchment areas and boundaries can be obtained from Education, Leisure and Housing - telephone 01856 873535 or email [education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk).

Children eligible for enrolment are those whose 5th birthday falls on or between 1st March and the end of February the following year. Any pupil who wishes to transfer to a school out with the catchment area will need to submit a Placing Request Form.

### 5.3 Primary to Secondary Transfer and the Catchment Secondary Schools for North Walls pupils.



Hoy falls in the catchment area for secondary education in both Kirkwall Grammar School (KGS) and Stromness Academy, and pupils from North Walls can transfer to either school after Primary 7. The P7 Class Teacher, Support for Learning Teacher, and Head Teacher collate information about pupil progress, attainment, and successful teaching strategies before pupils move into secondary school, and liaise with guidance staff.

Transition is further enhanced through participation in curricular projects and visits by secondary teachers. As well as the transition days, pupils also attend opportunities designed to help make new social ties with children from other schools. Other visits may be arranged and the children meet each other and KGS/Stromness Academy staff through music and sport activities. Parents will have an opportunity to view their school of choice and will be given a brief explanation of school life. For further information, contact

Kirkwall Grammar School  
Kirkwall  
Orkney  
KW15 1QN  
Tel: 01856 872102  
Email [admin.kgs@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk](mailto:admin.kgs@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk)

Stromness Academy  
Stromness  
Orkney  
KW16 3JS  
Tel: 01856 850660  
Email: [admin.sa@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk](mailto:admin.sa@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk)

## 5.4 Mid-Session Transfers

You may make a Placing Request at any time during a school session. If your child is experiencing problems at school, you are advised to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher prior to making a Placing Request. Completing the Application Form does not guarantee a place for your child at your chosen school. Your Placing Request will only be granted if there are surplus places available at the school.

## 5.5 Transport for Placing Requests

If a Placing Request is successful, parents will be responsible for the safety and transportation costs of their child to and from their chosen school.

# 6 Support for Pupils

## 6.1 Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

Taking care of our children's well-being help us ensure the most positive outcomes for them later in life. It gives them the potential to grow up ready to succeed and play their part in society.

Getting it right for every child is a programme that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people. It promotes a shared approach that:

- Builds solutions with and around children and families
- Enables children to get the help they need when they need it
- Supports a positive shift in culture, systems and practice
- Involves working together to make things better

Getting it right for every child is the foundation for work with all children and young people, including adult services where parents are involved. It builds on universal health and education services and is embedded in the developing early years and youth frameworks.

The Getting it Right approach looks at eight areas of 'well-being'. These are recognised as areas in which children and young people need to progress to do well now and in the future. They allow those responsible for the care and support of children to look at a situation in a structured way that will help them identify any needs and concerns, and plan with the child and family any action they need to take.

The eight wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI) are:

- **Safe**
- **Healthy**
- **Achieving**
- **Nurtured**
- **Active**
- **Responsible**
- **Respected**
- **Included**

The approach gives us a common language and a way to gather information about a child's world, making sure the child is growing and developing, and has everything they need from the people who look after them both at home and in the wider community.

It also encourages practitioners to think about who else might need to be involved (for example a teacher might need to contact other professionals to make sure that an education improvement plan with the child and family was meeting all the child's needs).

All children P1 – 7 complete a SHANARRI survey each term to monitor their wellbeing, the results of which are followed up by class teachers when required.

## 6.2 Key Adult

Your child's teacher is generally the person who knows your child best, and as such is your child's key adult, however where significant additional support needs are present, the key adult may change. The school consults with parents where a change in key adult is thought to be in the best interests of the child.



## 6.3 Additional Support Needs

Many children will face barriers to their learning at some time in their school career. These may be short or longer term and for a variety of different reasons. If a pupil is identified as requiring additional support then pupils, parents and staff are involved in helping identify specific needs and the school will provide appropriate intervention and support accordingly.

In Orkney we adopt either single or multi-agency approaches as appropriate to supporting pupils with additional needs. Within Education and Children's Services we have a number of specialist staff who support children and young people including: Additional Support for Learning (ASfL) teachers, Educational Psychology Services, Sensory Support Service, English as an Additional Language (EAL), Home Link Workers.

Our partner agencies include, Therapists e.g. Speech & Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy; Community Paediatricians, school nurses, Police Liaison Officers, social workers and those from voluntary organisations.

Similar processes may also be put into place for pupils who have been assessed as being able or gifted as these children might also need additional support to reach their full potential.

Further information on services and support can be found at [Growing Up In Orkney - Growing Up In Orkney](#)

## 6.4 Educational Psychology

Educational psychologists are trained to work in collaboration with school staff, parents and other professionals to help children and young people to achieve their full potential. They use psychological skills and knowledge to improve the learning and wellbeing of all children and young people and offer schools a range of services including consultation, assessment, intervention, research, project work as well as support for staff's professional learning and development.

During planned visits to the school, the educational psychologist meets with staff to discuss whole school and class issues and how best to meet the needs of the children and young people. These informal consultations aim to develop strategies the teacher can use to bring about positive change.

When concerns persist, school staff and the educational psychologist may decide that a more formal meeting would be helpful. If the concern is about an individual child, the school will ask the parent's permission to arrange a consultation meeting. This is led by the educational psychologist, with parents, school staff and sometimes others who can usefully contribute. The child or young person can also be supported to attend or contribute to the meeting in another way if it is thought appropriate. The aim is to develop a plan of action to bring about positive changes for the child or young person. Where other agencies are required to help meet a child or young person's needs, the educational psychologist may be involved in any multi agency assessment and planning.

If parents have any concerns about their child's progress or wellbeing at school, they should discuss these first with the class teacher or Head Teacher. Parents may also contact the Educational Psychology Service directly if they wish.

Further information on the Educational Psychology Service is available at: [Educational Psychology Service](#)

## 6.5 Meeting needs through Enhanced Provision

Orkney Islands Council is committed to supporting children and young children to be educated in local schools through providing the right support in the right place at the right time. Orkney Islands Council also uses a 4-stage intervention framework to assess and plan for meeting additional support needs through universal, targeted and specialist support. If parents have any questions about their child's additional support for learning, they should discuss these first with the class teacher or Head Teacher.

Local, direct support is how we meet pupils' needs initially, and all Orkney schools support pupils who have additional support needs (ASN). Some pupils who have more significant and/or complex needs, and may require support beyond their local school, can be supported flexibly through full-time or blended placement with an Enhanced Provision.



## 6.6 Protecting Children and Young People

All children have a right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. It is everyone's job to make sure that children in Orkney are safe. Education, Leisure & Housing have an important role in identifying children who have been abused or are at risk of being abused. Orkney Islands Council has clear procedures for all staff to follow. Head Teachers or designated member of staff are instructed to notify Orkney Islands Council when a member of staff has a suspicion that a child might have been abused or be at risk of abuse.

Orkney Children & Families will make a decision on whether or not an investigation is necessary and will advise accordingly. In every situation, the welfare of the child overrides other considerations.



## 6.7 Pupil Support Team

Further information on the Pupil Support Team is available on the Council's website: <http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/P/Pupil-Support.htm>

## 6.8 Pastoral Support

North Walls is a warm and caring place and pastoral support is available from members of staff at all times, as well as through our partner agencies. If you believe your child needs additional pastoral support, please speak to the class teacher in the first instance. In addition to the information shown above, the school handbook must include information specified by the Education (additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 which includes:

- the authority's policy in relation to provision for additional support needs.
- the arrangements made by the authority for keeping under consideration the additional support needs of each such child.
- the other opportunities available under this Act for the identification of children and have additional support needs.
- require, or would require, a co-ordinated support plan.
- the role of parents and children in the arrangements referred to above.
- the mediation services provided.
- the officer or officers of the authority from whom parents of children having additional support needs, can obtain advice and further information about provision for such needs.

School Handbooks must also contain information of any organisations specified by Scottish Ministers which provide advice, further information and support to parents of children and young people with ASN. These organisations are identified under The Additional Support for Learning (Sources of Information) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 as:

- Children in Scotland: Working for Children and Their Families, trading as "Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning", a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC003527;
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; and
- Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SCO12741.

## 7 School Improvement



### 7.1 Raising Attainment

Monitoring performance and using the resulting information to secure improvement is an important part of the work of head teachers, school staff and officers within Education Services. We use information from various assessment types to inform us of how a child is currently achieving, this is then tracked to previous data to monitor progress, intervening if necessary. The school uses the BGE Orkney Tracking Toolkit to capture and compare progress four times a year. These findings are examined by school staff, OIC and Education Scotland Advisors.

### 7.2 Standards and Quality Report

At the end of this academic year our school will publish a Standards and Quality report which highlights the school's major achievements. This report is published on the school website.

### 7.3 School Improvement Plan

Each session the school publishes a School Improvement Plan. Previous plans can be viewed on the school website: [http://www.orkney.co.uk/northwalls/?page\\_id=720](http://www.orkney.co.uk/northwalls/?page_id=720) The school improvement plan for the current school year can be located on the school website.

### 7.4 Transferring Educational Data about Pupils

The Scottish Government – Education and Training has asked that the undernoted advice be included in our school brochures.

Education authorities and the Scottish Government collected data about pupils on paper forms for many years. We now work together with schools to transfer data electronically through the ScotXed programme. Thus the Scottish Government has two functions: acting as a 'hub' for supporting data exchange within the education system in Scotland and the analysis of data for statistical purposes within the Scottish Government itself.

## What pupil data is collected and transferred?

Data on each pupil is collected by schools, local authorities and the Scottish Government. The data collected and transferred covers areas such as date of birth, Scottish Candidate Number (SCN), postcode, registration for free-school meals, whether a pupil is looked after by his/her local authority, additional support needs including disability and English as an Additional Language (EAL), and attendance, absence and exclusions from school. The SCN acts as the unique pupil identifier. Pupil names and addresses are not passed to the Scottish Government. Your postcode is the only part of your address that is transferred for statistical purposes, and postcodes are grouped to identify 'localities' rather than specific addresses. Dates of birth are passed on as 'month and year' only, again to ensure that individuals are never identified. Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be published by the Scottish Government.

Providing national identity and ethnic background data is entirely voluntary. You can choose the 'not disclosed' option if you do not want to provide this data. However, we hope that the explanations contained in this message and on the ScotXed website will help you understand the importance of providing the data.

## Why do we need your data?

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, the Scottish Government, education authorities and other partners such as the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Skills Development Scotland need accurate, up-to-date data about our pupils.

We are keen to help all our pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better examination results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows us to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils.
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils.
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement.
- share good practice.
- target resources better.

## Your data protection rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This message can give only a brief description of how we use data. Fuller details of the use of pupil data can be found on the ScotXed website <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed>

The Scottish Government works with a range of partners including Education Scotland and the SQA. On occasion, we will make individual data available to partners and also academic institutions to carry out research and statistical analysis. In addition, we will provide our partners with information they need in order to fulfil their official responsibilities. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of the Scottish Government, which will ensure that no individual level data will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing of data will be taken in consultation with colleagues within and out with the Scottish Government

## Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can in the first instance contact Education, Leisure and Housing on 01856 873535 or email [education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk). If you further concerns, please email the Senior Statistician, [scotxed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:scotxed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to The ScotXed Support Office, Area 1B, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ. Alternative versions of this page are available, on request from the ScotXed Support Office, in other languages, audio tape, braille and large print.

## Appendix 1

### Glossary

- CFE - Curriculum for Excellence
- ASN – Additional Support Needs
- EMA – Education Maintenance Allowance
- ASL – Additional Support for Learning
- SQA – Scottish Qualifications Authority
- FOI – Freedom of Information
- HT/PT – Head Teacher/Principal Teacher
- CLD – Community Learning and Development
- GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child

## Appendix 2

### Websites

You may find the following websites useful.

- <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone> - parents can find out about everything from school term dates to exam results. This site also offers information for pre-5 and post school. It also lists relevant publications for parents and provides hyper-links to other useful organisations.
- <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/find-an-inspection-report/> - parents can access school and local authority inspection reports and find out more about the work of Education Scotland.
- <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/S/schools.htm> - contains information for parents and information on Orkney schools.
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/> - contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying.
- <http://respectme.org.uk/> - Scotland's anti-bullying service. Contains information for parents and children on varying forms of bullying and provides help for parents and children who are affected by bullying
- <https://education.gov.scot/> - provides information and advice for parents as well as support and resources for education in Scotland
- <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en> - contains information for everyone on equality laws within the government and local authorities.
- <http://www.handsonscotland.co.uk/> - information on dealing with troubling behaviour

## Appendix 3

### Parent feedback

Please take a few minutes to fill in and return the questionnaire on this page. Your feedback will help us improve the handbook next year.

Tell us what you think.

Your feedback will help us to improve our handbook.

Did you find:	Please tick	
The handbook useful?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
The information you expected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
The handbook easy to use?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Please tell us how we can improve the handbook next year.

Thank you for filling in the questionnaire. Your views are appreciated. Please return this questionnaire to the school.