

**North West Sutherland Schools Parent Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022, 7pm, Durness Primary School**

**AGM**

**1. Attendees**

Graeme Smart, Aileen Macdonald, Katy Lee, Iona Shaw, Leanne Mckee, Sally Czerwik, Linda Tebay, Lynzi Montgomery, Joshua Keitany, Krysha Davis, Selena Campbell, Roma Corbett, Emma Morrison, Yvonne MacRae

**Apologies**

Murdette Price Davies, Dan Price Davies Diana Morrison, Carol-Anne Forsyth, Julie Mackay, Alice Birt, Denise Macdonald, Ashley Milne, Alanna Macleod, Alison Watt-Day

**Chair's report**

Previous chair was not present therefore Graeme Smart opened the meeting.

**2. Approval of accounts**

Durness Primary School	£1122.55 (includes £397 unbanked from raffle)
Scourie Primary School	£284.70
Kinlochbervie Primary School	£669.80
Kinlochbervie High School	£989.99
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Total	£3067.04

The Parent Council will need to apply to the Highland Council for their financial contribution at the end of Sept / start of October. Graeme Smart will contact office bearers when this is open for applications.

**3. Selection of council and office bearers**

All previous office bearers stepped down prior to elections.

Elected office bearers for 2022/23:

<b>Chair</b>	Sally Czerwik, seconded Roma Corbett
<b>Vice chair</b>	Leanne Mckee, seconded Yvonne MacRae
<b>Secretary</b>	Yvonne MacRae, seconded Selena Campbell
<b>Treasurer</b>	Iona Shaw, seconded Leanne Mckee

**4. Any other business**

Discussion around use of Ward Discretionary Funding previously granted to the parent council. As yet, we have been unsuccessful in finding service providers for extracurricular activities.

Meeting close 7.30pm.

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**Ordinary meeting followed immediately after AGM**

**1. Welcome**

Sally Czerwik, newly elected chair opened the meeting.

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**2. Minutes of last meeting**

Approved by Leanne, seconded by Iona.

**3. Matters arising from minutes**

None

**4. Head Teacher's Reports**

Please find the Head Teacher's report for the High School by Graeme Smart attached as appendix 1. This report was discussed at the meeting.

There was a discussion regarding the difficulty of finding appropriate housing for staff in the local area. There is a desire for furnished, long term lets.

**5. Nurseries**

Please find Aileen Macdonald's report for the nurseries attached as an appendix 2. This report was discussed at the meeting.

**a. Durness**

Nil

**b. Kinlochbervie**

Nil

**c. Scourie**

Scourie is no longer an Early Years level class; it now has a separate nursery. Further detail is included in appendix 2.

**6. Primary Schools**

Please find Katy Lee's report for the primary schools attached as an appendix 3. This report was discussed at the meeting.

**a. Durness**

Wish for Mr McRae, Active School Coordinator, to return to Durness School and nursery again. Unfortunately, this is unworkable due to his remit which

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states he must only work with pupils out with their normal class time. There was also an issue with payment for his travel. He is therefore unable to travel to Scourie or Durness anymore. All pupils will have the opportunity to join one of Mr McRae's activity groups in Kinlochbervie on Thursdays.

**b. Scourie**

Parents were keen to know if there would be a Christmas play / show this year; it was confirmed that there would be.

**c. Kinlochbervie**

Nil

**7. High School**

Parents were keen to know how the rewards system in the High School works for pupils to qualify for the end of year school trip. There was feeling from parents that it is not a fair system and is unachievable for some pupils. Staff explained that it is a rewards system based on points which are achieved by receipt of merit certificates, green cards, praise cards, good attendance, participation and commendations from teachers. There was discussion whether a reward trip should happen at all when pupil numbers are so low. It was suggested that the new Pupil Council should discuss what they feel a fair rewards system would look like. Staff also emphasised that the trips to Ridgway Adventure and Stirling / Edinburgh were for all pupils in the appropriate age group and had excellent attendance.

Current S1 parents praised the P7 to S1 transition as being very successful this year. Transition from nursery to P1 was also praised.

Parents asked whether there would be work experience offered to pupils as in previous years. The previous model of S3 pupils spending an allocated week doing work experience will not be reinstated. Pupils are instead encouraged to think of when and where they want to do work experience that is relevant to their future plans / ambitions. This will be supported by the school.

There is a webinar for anyone interested in the pupil trip to Morocco. This trip is open to current S3-5 pupils and will take place at the end of June/ beginning of July 2024. School funds / whole school fundraising will not support this trip. Pupils are instead encouraged to self-fund their trip by working part-time out with school and fundraising either as a group or on their own. The trip is likely to cost in the region of £2000 per pupil. There was discussion about whether this is an achievable trip for most pupils due to the cost. Further information is available in the Head Teacher's report and any pupil who is interested, but concerned about fundraising, should contact Graeme Smart directly.

**8. Treasurer's report**

As AGM above

**9. Fundraising**

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Parents enquired about fundraising. If parents wish to fundraise for any of the schools they were encouraged to organise a stall / table at existing Christmas fayres such as the Scourie Village Hall event or annual Christmas fayre in the High School.

**10. Correspondence**

None

**11. Any other current business (AOCB)**

Parents enquired about the possibility of using the Kinlochbervie nursery for the newly formed baby / toddler group. This is not feasible due to care inspectorate regulations not allowing other people on nursery premises. However, it was suggested that the new portacabin at the back of the High School may be a suitable venue for the weekly group.

Format of future meetings was discussed again. Some parents prefer face to face meetings, others prefer online. It was agreed that mixed format meetings with some parents online was preferred least. There are four planned meetings each year, it was agreed to have two online (winter months) and two in person meetings. In person meetings will rotate around the three villages.

November – online

February – online

April – in person, Scourie School

**Date of next meeting**

7pm, Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022, online

Meeting close 8.30pm

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**Appendix 1: Head Teacher's Report (High School)**

North West Sutherland Schools

Parent Council 14th September 2022

Head Teacher's Report

**Staffing:**

Towards the end of last term we had a group of pupils visiting Farr High School for an opportunity to meet with Nicky Grant, our Executive Chief Officer for education. Nicky is a former professional footballer, so our pupils played a match with her joining our team. After a discussion with our pupils and those from Farr the head teacher from Farr and I spoke with Nicky about some of the issues associated with being a very small school and in particular the uncertainties about staffing from one year to the next when our staffing is allocated based on our roll. Nicky agreed that we could keep the same staffing allocation for the next five years regardless of any fall in roll. This in effect means job security for the staff we currently have in post and a guarantee of consistency in subject offerings for at least the next few years. Of course staff move on and we may still face issues around recruiting to part time posts but at least we will be in a position advertise early and have some certainty at the end of each session.

Kim Richards is currently on maternity leave (she has had a baby girl) and the art teaching part of her post is being covered by Lesley Strachan who will be with us one day per week until October at least. Miss Rachel Teague took up her post as teacher of Music this week and will work in the high school and with the primaries, travelling to Durness and Scourie once a week.

Mrs MacFarlane has now left us and her role as PT ASN will be taken on by Dan Price Davies who will now be PT Support and Guidance. Mrs Price Davies is currently working as an Additional Support Needs teacher, and we hope to have her with us on a permanent basis very soon.

Rodrigo Sisdeli has joined us as a teacher of Spanish and is working both with us and with the Highland Virtual Academy.

We are currently advertising a PSA post for 20 hours to replace Kerry who is on maternity leave.

**SQA Results:**

Our pupils sat exams at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher this year and for many of them these were the first formal exams they had sat following the cancellation of exams in the last two years. We had an excellent set of results with all our leavers being able to go on to their chosen courses and destinations.

**Edinburgh/Stirling trip:**

This was a huge success with S1 – 3 pupil spending 3 night sand four action packed days in Edinburgh and Stirling with visits to theatre, book festival castle and Wallace monument

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among the highlights. The feedback from pupils and staff was hugely positive and we hope that this will become a regular feature in the school year.

**Morocco:**

Plans are under way to organise an adventure of a lifetime with a joint venture between Farr and ourselves. A webinar is scheduled for next week and we would encourage any parents to join in to find out more.

**Head Pupil Team:**

Olivia McCaul will be our Head Pupil this year with Millie Munro and Amy McCaul as her deputy head pupils. All three submitted very thoughtful and mature applications and I am confident we have a team which will achieve a great deal in the year ahead.

**Pupil council:**

I have asked Olivia and Harvey MacDonald to form the new pupil council with representatives from each year group and from the primary 7's. The pupil council is an opportunity for the pupils' voices to be heard and for them to help form school policy on any areas where they see a need for change or innovation. I look forward to working with them in the coming year.

**Extended Management Team Remits:**

We met recently as an extended management team to re-allocate many areas of our remits following staffing changes and these will be published on the schools website shortly. I also hope to be able to create an additional PT post which will be advertised internally and the successful candidate will take on a remit which will also be published on the website.

**Monday 19th September:**

**Bank Holiday designated on Monday 19 September 2022**

The Highland Council has confirmed that, as a mark of respect, we will observe the State Funeral of her Majesty The Queen on Monday 19 September 2022.

All schools, Council offices and service points will be closed to the public. Emergency out of hours services will continue. Waste collection will continue on that day, although the actual collection time may vary. Registration, burials and cremations will be provided as required. All out of hour arrangements in place for the weekend prior to the funeral will continue until the start of normal working hours on Tuesday 20 September.

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**Forthcoming events:**

- |               |                                                                      |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>19 Sep</b> | School closed                                                        |
| <b>20 Sep</b> | Singing Instructor visiting for pupil lessons                        |
| <b>21 Sep</b> | Football Trip to Glasgow                                             |
| <b>22 Sep</b> | Dynamic Earth at KLB Village Hall S1-2 2:15pm, S3 at 3pm tbc         |
| <b>24 Sep</b> | Football Trip to Glasgow                                             |
| <b>29 Sep</b> | S1-3 Tracking to Parents; Flu Vaccinations for all pupils; SDS Visit |
| <b>4 Oct</b>  | Newton Rooms Workshops (S1-3)                                        |
| <b>5 Oct</b>  | S1-3 Parents Evening (change of date)                                |
| <b>6 Oct</b>  | School Photographer – all schools                                    |
| <b>7 Oct</b>  | <b>Holidays begin at 1.25pm</b>                                      |

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**Appendix 2: Nursery Report**

**North West Sutherland Schools**  
**Early Learning & Childcare**  
**Report to parent council**  
**14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

**Staffing**

Scourie welcomed Lynzi to the setting in a full-time capacity at the start of term, meaning that Scourie now has a straight ELC class rather than the previous Early Level Class. Lynzi's move to Scourie resulted in a vacancy coming up in Durness which is currently being advertised with the closing date being Monday 19<sup>th</sup> Sept. This vacancy has been covered in the interim by Demi Eastcroft on a supply basis, but this is Demi's last week with us, so we wish her all the best with whatever comes next & thank her for all the work she has put in across our various settings.

The Durness post also includes one day (4hrs on a Friday) in Scourie to make it a 28hr post, but this can be done as a job-share if that were appropriate.

Leanne & Kris remain in Durness ELC as permanent staff, whilst Gladys & Iona are in Kinlochberrie. There is currently a 4hr vacancy in KLB, which has been advertised twice but it has failed to attract any applicants, yet. This is to cover lunch breaks so needs to be 1 hour per day.

**Roles**

The current roles for each setting are:

Durness ELC – 4 children

Scourie – 4 children

KLB – 4 children

There are some expected additions to the role over the course of the year.

**Newsletter**

Latest newsletter for ELC settings has been shared via Seesaw and contains reminders about drop of times & returning completed paperwork. Seesaw continues to be the main form of communication with families.

**Altogether session**

Our altogether Thursday session for this term will be on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept when we all go to KLB to be part of the planetarium visit. Further details of transport, timings etc will be shared soon.

**Lunches**

All 3 and 4 years plus eligible 2-year-olds are entitled to funded canteen lunch each day. A packed lunch from home is also an option. Highland Council has recently released updated guidance on healthy packed lunches from which Aileen will create a family-friendly version to share with parents.

**ELC improvement plan**

Along with the school improvement plan which covers identified developments across the 3-18, the ELC staff have produced an ELC-specific improvement plan which covers 3 themes:

- Leadership & management
- Self-evaluation
- Engagement with families

Child-friendly versions will be displayed on the parent noticeboards at each setting & will be made available on Seesaw.

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**Appendix 3: Primary School Report**

Durness, Kinlochbervie and Scourie Primaries : September 2022

**Staffing**

Durness Primary

Clerical: Wendy Morrison (Tues) Class Teacher: Ms Craggs, Mrs MacDonald (Mon) Ms Lee (Tues) Ms Poole: (Wed)

Kinlochbervie Primary

Clerical : Noeleen Chapman (Mon, Tues, Weds (am)) Wendy Morrison (Thurs)

Learning Support : Mrs Ross (Tues) , Mrs Price Davies , Learning Support ( Mon, Tues, Weds, Friday) Christine Corbett (Mon, Thurs)

Class teachers: Ms Maddocks and Ms Forrest

Scourie Primary

Clerical : Mrs Ross & Ms Meek Learning Support : Mrs Ross Class teachers : Mrs Davis (P1-3) and Mrs Curley/Mrs Wade (P4-7). Ms Lee (Mondays) , Mrs MacDonald (Tuesdays)

**Music Teacher:** Ms Rachel Teague will be visiting all our primaries for music lessons this term .

Kinlochbervie (Mon). Durness (Tues) , Scourie (Weds)

**Key Assessment Tasks : Continual reporting to Parents**

As part of our continual reporting to parents key assessment tasks are being shared termly with parents via Seesaw. This year we are going to be sharing a 'Wellbeing Booklet' with parents. Children will complete two tasks each term. Parents have been invited to information session at all primaries. For parents unable to attend the information will be posted out shortly.

**Home—School Links**

We use Seesaw regularly to share teaching and learning activities with parents. These should give parents a continued insight into what their child is learning in school. Thursday's teaching and learning is shared via the NWSS Seesaw pages too.

**Active Schools .**

Mr Macrae will be visiting NWSS on Thursdays. He will be running lunch time sports clubs and after school sessions. This term P1-4 have the opportunity to attend a lunchtime Gymnastics Club and P5-7 have an after school Basketball Club. Transport home has been arranged via the high school buses where possible.

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**Planetarium Visit**

We are delighted to announce that we have managed to arrange a visit from a portable planetarium .A team from Dynamic Earth the Edinburgh based Science Centre will be visiting Kinlochbervie on Thursday 22nd September . All children will have a visit and workshop in the planetarium and there will also be an evening event (7pm) for the community too.

**Newton Room Visit**

The Thurso based Science Centre will once be visiting us again this term. Last term P5-7 pupils took part in a robotics day. This term the workshops on October 3rd will have a biology theme around the salmon life cycle.

**Cycle Scotland**

Mr Price Davies has recently completed the course to become a Cycle Scotland Bike Instructor. This means we can now run Level 1 and 2 cycle training in school Kinlochbervie for P5-7 pupils. Older Scourie pupils have had this opportunity too with Mrs Curley. We will ensure that Durness children also have this training as they get older.

The level 1 training is in the playground and there are a series of games and activities on bikes to encourages good balance and control.

Level 2 takes them out onto the road to learn and practice road skills such as different turns, u turns, overtaking parked cars and what cycling position on the road to take.

**Dandelion Tattie Survey**

All our Early years and Primary pupils took part in this tattie growing project- it's been interesting hearing about how they have grown ! Families are encouraged to record their crops via the link below : <https://dandelion.scot/tattie-survey/>

**Rights Respecting Schools**

We are currently working towards our Silver: Rights Aware Award. We have a calendar of 'Right of the Month'. This involves assemblies and class lessons.

- Education (August) • Participation (September) • Racism (October)

**Continual Professional Development**

Our teaching staff are committed to continual professional development (CPD). Here are some of the courses they have been on already this school year either as after school twilight sessions or during the recent inservice days.

Additional Support for Learning Act : roles and responsibilities

Outdoor First Aid

Wraparound Spelling

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Teaching Modern Languages (Primary French)

Learning for Sustainability – Global goals

Talk for Writing

Emerging Literacy : Phonological Awareness, Concepts of Print and Pre-Handwriting Skills

Whole Word Reading Approaches (Down's Syndrome Scotland)

Literacy for All in an Inclusive Classroom.

Dyslexia Friendly Classrooms

Woodland Outdoor Leader training

Literacy for all in an age of diversity