

S1 PARENT NEWSLETTER



Hello! I'm Belinda Morrison, the Head of Year for S1-S3 pupils at Stromness Academy. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to you, as a parent/guardian of one of our new S1 pupils. I have been delighted to see how quickly the youngsters have settled into the routines at Stromness Academy, particularly when they have had such a limited induction to the school. Most can now navigate their way around the school building: I haven't bumped into a lost child for the past two days! Any issues with school transport seem to have been resolved and the children are engaging fully with the procedures we have put into place before school, at interval and at lunchtime to keep everyone safe.

All new pupils who join Stromness Academy are assigned a Guidance teacher who has a personal interest in them and their progress during their time at school. They help pupils to settle in and, throughout their time at Stromness Academy, are the main link between home and school. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact your child's Guidance Teacher; their contact details can be found at the end of this newsletter.



Melanie Johansen
Guidance Manager
Responsible for pupils
in 1R



Helen Murray
Guidance Teacher
Responsible for pupils
in 1T



Clare McGeary
Guidance Teacher
Responsible for pupils
in 1M

S1 Settling in Evening

Wednesday 1st September 4 – 6pm

This session, due to the ongoing covid restrictions, we have changed the way we set up our first S1 Parents' Evening. We are planning individual online meetings with Guidance Staff and Support for Learning Staff. This will give you the opportunity to briefly meet with the staff who are working most closely with your child so that you can put a face to a name, ask questions and discuss any concerns that you or your child may have; if a more in-depth discussion is needed staff will note it and arrange a longer meeting. A separate letter will be sent with full details of how to book appointments.

It is hoped that covid restrictions will be lifted soon so that we will be able to invite you into school to meet with more staff, have a tour round the building, find out more about the S1 curriculum, the opportunities and support we offer to our pupils.



Support Services



Rachael Mehmi
PT Support for Learning
Responsible for pupils
in 1R and 1T

All members of the Guidance Team work closely with Support for Learning staff. They regularly liaise with each other and a number of other support services to ensure that all of our pupils are gaining as much as possible from their time at Stromness Academy. It is very much our aim to ensure that every pupil thrives and achieves in the widest possible sense. To this end we actively encourage all our pupils to embrace the opportunities which become available to them. Contact from parents/carers is very important to us – if you feel that there is something happening in your child's life that may affect them

in the school, please let us know so that we can support them in the most appropriate way. The role of all staff, particularly the Guidance Teacher and Support for Learning staff is to help every child, and we greatly value your help with this.



Jen Nixon
Support for Learning
Teacher
Responsible for pupils in 1M

From time to time some of our young people benefit from additional support from staff from outside school and we offer a range of counselling, befriending and health care services: -



Hello, my name is June Anderson and I provide an in-school counselling service. Counselling is a confidential conversation with someone who is trained and qualified to listen and help with issues such as, stress, anxiety, low mood, anger, bullying, relationship or family difficulties, self-harm or anything else that upsets or causes distress. To get an appointment you can, contact Guidance Teachers or send a text message to 07960 745004 or email: june.therapy@gmail.com

I'm Imogen Kerr, the Educational Psychologist for Stromness Academy. I work with children and young people, families, and school staff, to help everyone apply what we know from psychology as we support children and young people to learn, develop, and flourish. As well as supporting individual pupils, I am also frequently involved with class-based projects and whole-school initiatives. If you would like a chance to speak with me, just ask your child's Guidance Teacher to arrange a short informal appointment. Or you can contact me direct on: gw16kerrimogenruth@glowmail.org.uk



We are the School Health Team and are normally in school every Monday offering a drop-in service at break and lunchtime. We can offer support for anxiety, sleep, healthy lifestyles, relationships and much more. Plus we can signpost you to other people and organisations and could provide more specialised support. Again Guidance Staff can arrange appointments or you can contact: ork-hb.schoolnurses@nhs.net

The Curriculum

S1-S3 pupils follow a broad general education (BGE) where they study groups of subjects within a range of curricular areas. They move round the school to different classrooms to be taught by subject specialist teachers. Sometimes teachers work together to deliver inter-disciplinary projects. For example, in January S1 pupils do a Healthy Me topic in Science, Physical Education, Personal and Social Education and Home Economics.

Pupils have copied their timetable into their school planner; your support would be welcome in ensuring that they look at their timetable each evening and pack their bag for the next day, making sure they have the books and equipment they need – and taking out what they don't need, as we often find S1 pupils burdened by carrying every book with them every day!

Curriculum Area	Stromness Academy Subjects
Expressive Arts	Art & Design, Music,
Health and Wellbeing	HE, PE
Languages	English, French, German
Mathematics	Mathematics
Religious and Moral Education	RME
Sciences	S1 Science – a Mix of Biology, Chemistry & Physics
Social Studies	Geography, History
Technologies	Computing Science, Admin & IT, Food Technology, Fashion & Textiles, Practical Craft Skills



Homework

Some (not all) subjects issue homework and the amount will vary between subjects. Your child has been issued with a school planner and shown how to use it to record their homework. We are pleased that sports, drama and music activities in the community are beginning to restart and fully support our pupils' involvement in these. Homework is never set with a single night's deadline, so your child should always be able to organise their schoolwork around other commitments. You can support your child with this by looking at their planner with them and helping them to decide when they will do their homework. You can also help by ensuring they have a quiet place to work, without distractions such as mobile phones.

Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy and numeracy are key skills we focus on in S1. Reading has been proven to help pupils access the rest of the curriculum, improve connectivity of the brain, improve memory, reduce stress and increase attention span. All S1-S3 pupils at Stromness Academy participate in an Accelerated Reader program and are expected to do twenty minutes reading every day at home. Twenty minutes are allocated to this every day during class time too.

Accelerated Reader is a computer program that helps teachers manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. Pupils pick a book at their level and read it at their own pace. When books are finished, pupils take a short quiz on the computer so teachers can gauge their level of understanding of the book read and set them appropriate targets for their next book.

Daily practice is also important for numeracy, and the Maths Department has sent a separate letter giving you more information on accessing the software we use for Maths homework.

The Shape of the School Day for S1 pupils

Please note, it is a long morning for our S1 pupils as they don't have lunch until 1.15pm and some may be leaving the house before 8am. We would therefore encourage pupils to bring a snack with them or use the school canteen at interval.

Monday - Thursday

Registration 8.50 – 9.00	PERIOD 1 9.00 – 9.50	PERIOD 2 9.50 – 10.40	PERIOD 3 10.40 – 11.30	INTERVAL	PERIOD 4 11.45 – 12.35	PERIOD 5 12.35 – 1.15	LUNCH	PERIOD 5 2.00 – 2.50	PERIOD 7 2.50 – 3.35
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Friday

PERIOD 1 8.50 – 9.40	PERIOD 2 9.40 – 10.30	INTERVAL	PERIOD 3 10.45 – 11.35	PERIOD 4 11.35 – 12.25	LUNCH	PERIOD 5 1.10 – 1.55
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Calendar

1 st September 2021	S1 Parents Meeting with Guidance and Support for Learning Staff
7 th /8 th October 2021	Staff In-service Days
11 th October 2021	October Holidays
25 th October 2021	Start of Winter term
9 th November 2021	S1 Parents' Evening
22 nd December 2021	Christmas Holidays
5 th January 2021	Start of Spring Term

Parental Contact

If you have any queries or concerns about your child then please get in touch with us. Guidance Staff are usually your first point of contact but you can also contact me or our Head Teacher, Jane Partridge. Here are our contact details: -

Melanie Johansen	melanie.johansen@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk	850660	07341788164
Helen Murray	helen.murray@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk	850660	07341 788161
Clare McGeary	clare.mcgeary@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk	850660	
Belinda Morrison	belinda.morrison@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk	850660	
Jane Partridge	jane.partridge@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk	850660	

Our primary means of getting in touch with parents are text and email – we know our messages are much more likely to reach you this way than relying on “pupil post”. Letters about trips, activities etc. and alerts such as weather affecting school transport will all be passed on in this way. It is therefore vitally important that you tell us if any of your contact details change. If you are not contactable by text/email, please inform the school office who will ensure your child is given paper copies of letters.

More general information about what is going on in the school is also shared electronically. Please follow our school Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/stromnessacademy/>

We also encourage you to visit the Stromness Academy School Website at <http://www.stromnessacademy.org.uk/> to get a feel of the opportunities Stromness Academy has to offer to your child.

In particular, the [Daily Bulletin](#) which pupils hear each morning is uploaded onto the website, and parents can consult this to find out about extra-curricular activities and planned events that are running.

Finally, if you would like to get more involved with the school community why not join the Stromness Academy Parent Council so that we can work in partnership with you to the benefit of all pupils. They act as a sounding board for school policies and developments, influencing change by putting in the parent perspective. They also have a sub-committee who fund-raise for the school and have been proud to be able to respond to staff requests for equipment to enrich learning. It would be good to have some new members; if you are interested in getting involved, please contact the Parent Council via the school on admin.sa@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk or their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/StromnessAcademyParents>

