

Orphir Community School

Monday, 15 September 2025

Eduspot (formerly known as Xpressions)

For all the information that I send out from the school office, the app has now changed name and is now called Eduspot. You are welcome to download the app and use it as I send out all the information via Eduspot or Email by default. Occasionally, if I need info to get to folks quickly, I will text, eg, road closures due to an accident, but every text we send costs the school, so our preference is to use the free methods of communication for regular non-emergency information.

The app can be downloaded from

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.groupcall.emerge.parental&hl=en_GB
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/eduspot/id787308623>



Feedback from parents on using the app have found it easier to find school information when it is collated in one place rather than scrolling through all the emails to find something from the school. If you have problems with the app, do get in touch with me at the school and I can give some pointers to maybe help!

Communications

For us to best support the children in school, it is helpful for us to know if there are any changes at home, eg, different carer if Mum and Dad are away, poorly or death of someone close to the family or family pet,

Please do get in touch with the school office if you need to change contact details, update family situations or address.

Curriculum Information Evening

Thursday 18th September

Please join us for our Curriculum Information Evening here in the school at 6 PM. Here there will be the opportunity to learn more about the learning taking place in your child's class this year and ways in which you can perhaps help. In response to some valued parental feedback we will also further explain our Curriculum for Excellence levelling process in a bid to help make this part of our reporting more user friendly and real. You will also be issued with a yearly curriculum overview for your child's class and your first termly class newsletter.

Family Quiz Night

Friday 3rd October

The Parent Forum are planning to hold a family friendly quiz night on Friday 3rd October at 6pm. The quiz is fundraising for school activities, with the aim of continuing to support the outdoor education for P6/7 and school trips for nursery to P7.

It will be £5 per adult and secondary school children, free for primary school age children. Teams of around 6 with a maximum of 4 adults. Tables can be booked by emailing admin.orphir@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk

There are some things we would like your help with:

Before the event

Donation of raffle prizes.

On the night

Donation of sandwiches or baking for the supper.

Help setting up the hall and supper.

Front of house and raffle sales.

Help with serving and clearing the supper.

Help with dishes and cleaning the hall.

We are hoping to have enough helpers to allow everyone that wants to take part in the quiz to do so.

We will have a sign up sheet at the curriculum event on Thurs 18th Sept and would be grateful if you could consider how you might be able to help. If you are unable to come on the 18th then please complete this form if you able to help.

<https://forms.office.com/e/BPUKtSRJZb>

Any raffle prizes can be put to the school by Tuesday 30th Sept.

Thank you for your support with this,
Orphir Parent Forum

School Uniform

We have loads of school uniform here so do feel free to come in and pick some up if you wish. We will pop out the boxes on the Curriculum Information Evening for you to peruse and take away if you would like.

PE Kits

A small reminder that PE is on a Tuesday and please could PE kits come in and stay for the term. Everyone has been given a PE bag and can be left on the second peg next to their named peg.

Junk Models

Often the bairns are using the blue plastic attachments in their junk model creations. Please could you return these to the school when the 'creation' has outlived it's physical or creative use. 😊 There is no hurry on their return - just when the model is finished with. Thank you!



Wellies/Waterproofs

We have given out wellies and waterproofs to all the bairns that don't have wellies in school currently. If you are planning to put in wellies or waterproofs too with your bairn, that is also fine and we will take in all those we have given out.

Performances at St Magnus Centre

Good morning, Calvin Wilson here from Lyth Arts Centre across in Caithness. I'm promoting a couple of new kids theatre shows we are taking over to the St Magnus Centre this Friday. The shows are part of our new SPLORE consortium of venues, more info here on the project: <https://lytharts.org.uk/splcore-a-double-bill-of-new-shows-for-young-people/>

Info on both shows below and I've also attached some posters.

IDEAS JUKEBOX (ages 0-5)

Expect puppetry, live music and the opportunity to get involved in this interactive performance and workshop. Watch BIG ideas come to life when we play them on the Jukebox and then add your own ideas to the mix.

<https://lytharts.org.uk/event/ideas-jukebox-st-magnus-centre/>

MAYA & THE WHALE (ages 10+)

Maya and the Whale is the story of a young climate activist on the run who finds herself face to face with a dying whale. Her dad works in the oil industry and her mum just wants her to have a childhood free of worry, but how can she go about business as usual when there's a climate emergency?

<https://lytharts.org.uk/event/maya-the-whale-st-magnus-centre/>



Family Quiz Night

Friday 3rd October
6pm

at the Orphir Community School
£5 per Adult (supper provided)

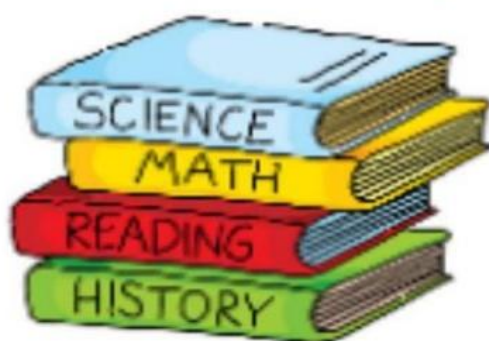
Free for Primary School Age children

Bring your own refreshments

Teams of around 6 (maximum of 4 adults)

Table's can be booked by emailing
admin.orphir@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk

Raising funds for the P6/7 outdoor education
& School trips for Nursery to P7



Orphir Community School Forum (OCSF)

Minutes of AGM

Wednesday 3 September 2025 in person, 6.00pm

1 Welcome:

Liz welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Present:

Emma Diamond, Paula Powell (Treasurer), Grant Thomson (Head Teacher), Liz Johnston (Chair), Shona Garson (Minutes), John Dearness (Principal/Class Teacher), Louise Sclater

2 Apologies: Kendall Pyke

3 Previous AGM minutes:

Not located

4 Treasurers' Report

In the bank is the total of £1586

Election of Officers

As per the constitution, elections take place every 2 years (2024/2026/2028) and the office bearers remain as follows:

Chair:	Liz Johnston
Treasurer:	Paula Powell
Vice Chair:	Emma Diamond
Secretary:	Shona Garson (paid post)

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Emma Diamond, Paula Powell (Treasurer), Grant Thomson (Head Teacher), Liz Johnston (Chair), Shona Garson (Minutes), John Dearnness (Principal/Class Teacher), Louise Sclater

6 Apologies: Kendall Pyke

7 Previous minutes:

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2025

Proposed Liz Johnston

Seconded Emma Diamond

8 Matters arising

- Coaches for this year are
 - Netball Kazia Watson and Eilidh Christie
 - Football Nicky Watson and Erland Johnston
- Start dates TBC for both sports
- Liz to support coaches to access keyholding induction and organise PVG check for Eilidh.

9 Treasurers' Report

In the bank is the total of £1586

10 HT Report (attached)

Liz congratulated the school staff and Grant on the Inspection findings and the messages received.

Halloween Disco - Thursday 30 October, 6.00-7.30pm

Prizes for neeepy lanterns or pumpkins

Format:

Drop off event

Helpers for kitchen

Paula

Louise

Emma

Supper

Hot Dog Roll

Cheese Roll

Vegan Alternative

Ketchup

School Office to organise:

Ice cream cone or wafer cup

Apples for dooking

Juice for supper

11 Personal Devices

Focus group meetings have been cancelled for the moment. Shona explained that Imogen Kerr is looking to set up a focus group for the mainly secondary school parent councils to feed into. Liz expressed that it would be good to have feedback from parents that imminently have children going up to secondary school.

12 AOCB

Liz proposed a fundraising quiz to be held this term - details were decided below:

QUIZ

3 October 2025 - timings TBC

Team captains book tickets/reserve a table by emailing school office

Teams of up to 6 people

£5 per head, primary school children free

Maximum of 16 tables

Liz to ask Kris Beavan at Northlink for a good prize?

Helpers needed:

Raffle/admission 2 people

Kitchen 3-4 people and more to serve

Poster to include reasons why fundraising:

Outdoor Education

School trips/bus hire

Curriculum Evening 18 September, details below

John Dearnness explained about the Curriculum Evening

5.45-6.45pm (to allow parents to attend instrumental concert)

It is an opportunity to learn more about the learning taking place in your child's class and ways in which you can perhaps help. We will also further explain our Curriculum for Excellence levelling process in a bid to help make this part of our reporting more user friendly and real.

There could be a sign up sheet for the quiz at this evening.
There will be school uniform available too.

Orphir Community School Forum

Encouraging more people to attend would be great and it is a forum where everyone is encouraged to speak and it is a two way conversation.

Moving forward, John will attend 2 and the P1-3 class teachers will also attend 2.

Head Teacher's Reports

Grant will have reports ready to go out with agenda 2 weeks before the meeting to allow attendees to prepare questions beforehand.

Outdoor Education/Residential Trip

Survey for Primary 5-6 families of children in 2025-26 cohort. Main question will be whether to have a joint P6-7 trip out of Orkney based on a city break type experience rather than an outdoors education. Before this can happen, John and Grant will put together a programme and some very rough costings to give families as much information for the decision making process. For clarity, P7 are booked for 2026 to go to Hoy, this would be potentially for 2027.

Next Meeting Dates -

Term 2	12 November 2025 Trips Burns' Supper Cost of School Day
Term 3	14 January 2025
Term 4	TBC at Term 2 Meeting

Orphir Parent Forum Head Teacher Report

Wednesday 3rd September 2025

It has been a lovely start to the new academic year, and we welcomed Calum, Ellie D, Ellie M, Grace, Kammy and Stanley to Primary 1 as well as Connie, Raffy and Craigie to the Nursery. Our total roll in the Nursery is 13, 16 in P1-3 and 16 in P4-7 giving us a whole school roll of 45. Our staffing structure throughout the school remains as it was reported in June with no changes. As reported in the latest newsletter Jenna Tait start her maternity leave after the October holiday and her position will soon be advertised on a temporary basis.

The HMIE visit on Tuesday 26th August was very positive across all levels. The team of two inspectors from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education observed the teaching and learning of Literacy & English across the whole school and reviewed a range of pupil work and assessment data. Some of the main strengths the inspectors highlighted were:

- The high-quality teaching and impact that Sounds Write is having in P1-3.
- The fluency and expression of the readers in P4-7.
- The caring relationships evident to all children in the Nursery.
- **Children's voice is strong across the school and is central to learning. They clearly are valued.**
- **Children are confident to talk about their learning.**
- The ability of learners to decode and attack words.

During the visit we were provided with high level messages that suggested possible areas of development, all of which we not only agreed with and already highlighted before the visit. As a result, we will be looking at:

- Ensuring a wider range of genres of writing are taught as well as extended pieces of writing.
- Implementing progressions to ensure consistency in planning and levelling.

As reported at the end of term our school priorities for this session are high quality teaching and learning in Religious & Moral Education and French. We can now report that our two nursery priorities this session are outdoor environments and high-quality interactions. Parental feedback forms were issued last term and the responses from these will help form of how these school priorities take shape, ensuring that parental voice can be captured in our developments.

The year ahead is busy and as always, we never want any of our families to miss out on anything. As a staff, we have put together a diary of parental connection and engagement events for the year ahead that was shared in our term 1 newsletter. This forward planning hopefully allows as many of our families and wider friends to connect with us in as many ways as possible. The dates are those which form part of our wider curriculum and engagement where your presence is welcomed (or it may be an important school date you really need to remember).

Our Curriculum Information Evening planned for Thursday 18th September will be the chance for all of our families to pop in and hear more about the year ahead in each class. In P1-3 Mrs Rendall will share more about Literacy in P1-3 and Mr Dearness about Numeracy in P4-7. Both teachers will also explain a little more about our Curriculum for Excellence levelling process and hopefully make this more parent friendly by sharing an alternative way to think about it kindly shared by a parent through feedback at the end of last term.

Our annual P6 Outdoor Education activity days take place on Tuesday 23rd, Wednesday 24th and Thursday 25th September. This year Orphir are grouped with Stenness and Firth and again the days take place at Firth Primary School.

As a school we plan to continue our attendance monitoring and reporting this year and are pleased to report that at the end of last academic year our overall school attendance percentage sat at 95.02% - the authority target being 95%. Our term 4 alone was 97.02%, term 3 alone was 94.5% and term 2 alone was 94% - we are pleased that this rose steadily over the course of the year and proof that our joined approach to how we should communicate with parents worked – thank you parent council for your valued input.

Upcoming dates this term:

- Instrumental course for identified pupils: Monday 15th to Thursday 18th September.
- Curriculum Information Evening: Thursday 18th September.
- Last day of term: Friday 10th October.

Forward notice:

- In-Service: Monday 27th October.
- In-Service: Tuesday 28th October.
- Halloween Disco: Thursday 30th October.

Shona will continue to send reminders of the above via her fortnightly updates

As well as a thank you to all members of the Parent forum for everything they have done to support the school this year I want to express an individual thank you to Liz, our Chair. As staff we feel incredibly well supported by you and it is clear you have the same 'child at the centre' vision as we do and for that we are grateful to you.

IDEAS JUKEBOX

By Hazel Darwin-Clements



INDEPENDENT
ARTS PROJECTS

Expect puppetry, live
music and the
opportunity to get
involved!

'Big ideas for
wee people!'



SPLORE



Friday 19th Sept @ 3pm
St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall

To book: www.lytharts.org.uk or call 01955 601428

INDEPENDENT
ARTS PROJECTS

Darkly comic &
provocative theatre
show, with live
music, for ages 10+

"I thought the
performance was
incredible"

Maya & the Whale

By Hazel Darwin-Clements

A show about smallness
facing up to hugeness



SPLORE



Friday 19th Sept @ 6.30pm
St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall

To book: www.lytharts.org.uk or call 01955 601428

Looking after ourselves

Free online workshops



Find out ways to
look after
yourself and
stay calm

Join
us!

Family life can be stressful. This workshop helps you to find ways to look after yourself and stay calm so you can juggle everything better.

Come along and:

- Understand the benefits of recharging our batteries for emotional and physical health
- Share feelings and develop realistic expectations and coping strategies
- Overcome feelings of guilt and failure
- Gain practical strategies to reduce the stresses of family life

More information

Tuesday 4th
November at 7pm

Book a space or
find out more at:

ork.henry@nhs.scot



Understanding children's behaviour



Free online workshops

Find out
what's driving
your child's
behaviour

Join
us!



Come along and:

- Understand feelings and needs behind children's behaviour
- Discover the importance of listening to children, and how it can support meeting their needs
- Explore responding with empathy, and how it can positively influence children's behaviour

More information

Tuesday 18th
November at 7pm

Book a space or
find out more at:

ork.henry@nhs.scot