

AITH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



New Primary 1 Guide
2026

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with information that may help you prepare for your child starting P1. We hope that your child will find Primary an enjoyable and enriching experience and trust that the information contained here will help them settle in happily. It will also let you know some of the activities that take place in the school.

You may want to keep this booklet handy for future reference and any further information will be supplied as it becomes available.

We are always looking for ways to improve the information supplied to parents. We know that working closely with parents is vital to the success of the school and our pupils. We welcome parental involvement and encourage parents to share in the life of the school.

We pride ourselves on giving our pupils the best possible experience at school and to prepare them in every possible way for the journey ahead. Involving children in the planning and decision making processes has been hugely successful and is developing all the time.

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of school not covered here, please feel free to ask. We will do our best to answer your queries and include the information in future editions of this booklet.

2. PREPARATION FOR PRIMARY

Learning starts from our first breath! School staff build on what your child has already learnt during the very important pre-school years. You are your child's first teacher and will continue to play an important part throughout their education. We aim to work closely with parents for the benefit of your children.

The social development of children varies greatly at this age. In Nursery, staff use their emotional and social development lessons to help children interact well with others. The personal and social education programme is then built on in the Primary. Children understand the need for rules within the class, school building and the playground. The children take part in discussing what is fair and in deciding the rules and expectations.

It is worth mentioning here that we all need to work together to encourage mutual respect in being polite and considering the welfare of others. Promoting the use of 'please', 'thank-you', 'excuse me', etc. are all part of social development.

The school has a Facebook page. We are using this to share school news, make the school community aware of upcoming events and make school announcements. At times, this can include photos and/or videos. Facebook allows for parents and members of the community to make comments and share opinions. We embrace this increased participation, however Facebook should not be the first choice of communication with the school or teacher. If you have any queries, concerns or complaints, please contact the school directly rather than posting on social media and we will endeavour to deal with any issues as soon as we can.

Further use of Social Media: We understand that social media is a growing part of life for many. With this in mind, we all have a responsibility in looking after our pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community and we would ask you to give careful consideration when posting online. Please be respectful of others privacy and we request that you do not post images (photos and videos) containing other children on social media sites, when taken at school events unless agreed with those parents.

Effective safeguarding of children is best achieved when we work together to meet the needs of all in our care.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Language develops through listening, speaking and communication with others, especially in a one to one situation with an adult. The child learns new vocabulary and can ask for explanations. You can help to develop your child's language through sharing a variety of experiences with your child. The following are just a few suggestions - you probably do these in your normal daily routine and many more which are equally successful. These activities should be enjoyable:

- reading stories to your child
- learning nursery rhymes and songs
- playing games
- jigsaws and construction toys
- baking
- sorting objects according to size, colour and shape and counting them
- drawing, colouring and painting

Visiting libraries, going for walks, shopping and so on are all useful activities.

IMPORTANCE OF STORIES AND NURSERY RHYMES

A quiet story session with an adult creates a positive association for your child. This helps to establish a habit of reading and listening to stories. Some other benefits are listed here:

- children begin to understand the idea of reading and that symbols on paper have meaning
- vocabulary is developed
- listening and memory skills are developed by retelling stories
- concentration is improved
- children learn that books are enjoyable and pictures relate to the story
- children learn to respect books

Learning nursery rhymes by heart helps to develop the following:

- listening skills for later phonics work (learning sounds of letters)
- memory
- recognising patterns in sounds of words (helps with spelling)



3. THE SCHOOL DAY



THE FIRST DAYS

The school day for pupils starts at **8.55am**. It is open to parents whether they wish to accompany their child into school on the first day. Your child will be met by their teacher and helped to find their peg, tray and so on. Experience has shown that children are very soon happily occupied, and parents are free to leave.

At **10.30am** there is a 20-minute interval where a choice of milk or water is provided (see Dinners and Milk Money). The school operates a healthy Tuck Shop daily during morning interval. We stock crisps, flavoured milk and cereal bars. We also hope parents will support our aims in Dental Health Education and keep break times a "Sweet Free Zone". Profits from the Tuck Shop go into

the School Fund. Some pupils take in their own healthy snacks for morning and afternoon break times.

For the first two weeks of term, Primary 1 children are due to attend school for mornings only. Children should be **collected after lunch, from the school playground before the afternoon classes commence at 1pm.** This is to allow your child to settle into school gradually and adapt to new routines. However, as we finish at **2pm on a Friday**, if your child wishes to stay on until then on this day, they are very welcome to do so.

Sometimes children do not go straight home from school, but go to relatives, the Leisure Centre or to attend parties, etc. If you have arranged for your child to do this, please write a note in your child's home/school diary or telephone the school beforehand. We are never sure about the accuracy of messages brought orally by young children.

NOTE: School bus hirers are not obliged to carry occasional passengers, and many have no room or insurance cover for extras. Your child is **not entitled** to a seat on other buses. Please arrange transport in advance and also tell your driver about the change. **This is not the responsibility of the school.**

4. USEFUL INFORMATION

TRANSPORT

Any arrangements which are not straightforward or regarding vacant seats, should be dealt with by the SIC Strategy Officer – Edna Nicol on 01595 744 886.  enquires Transport

CLOTHING

The only special items your child will need are shorts and gym shoes for PE. We will provide each child with a PE bag. If you could send in an art apron (old t-shirt) to be kept at school, this will help to keep their clothes clean during messy activities. Please ensure that all personal possessions are clearly labelled with your child's name (including jackets).

PLAY INTERVALS

Primary children play in the Primary outdoor area immediately outside their classroom entrance. They are however, not allowed on the climbing frame until P3 for reasons of safety and numbers.

The Janitors and support staff supervise at intervals and lunchtime. They deal with any minor mishaps but anything serious is reported to the class teacher and/or the Senior Management Team.

5. WHAT HAPPENS IN PRIMARY?

LITERACY

The development of each child's language is pursued through an integrated programme of language work involving listening, talking, writing and reading. In the Early Years classroom, we use a range of materials in conjunction with the Oxford Reading Tree and the Jolly Phonics scheme to learn letters sounds. We develop literacy and fine motor skills through play. Play enables children to practice the language skills they have learnt. It helps with vocabulary development, sequencing, creative thinking, attention and listening skills. The Class Teacher will give you more information on language development and share ideas to help your child become an enthusiastic reader.

The children will be provided with reading bags to protect the reading books taken home. We encourage children to take care of their books. Please provide a small box or tin to hold key words in, if possible.

Children take their reading books, word boxes and a phonic sounds bag home each evening and we would appreciate if this could be practised with your child at home. Daily information regarding reading will be communicated through a home/school diary.

NUMERACY

In numeracy, emphasis is placed on practical activities to introduce and develop new concepts and ideas. The use of games, play, online and other support materials is used to aid progression and understanding.

SPECIALIST STAFF

We are fortunate to have specialist teachers in Physical Education, Art and Music who will get to know and be involved with teaching your child throughout their Primary and Secondary education in Aith Junior High School.

This is only a brief outline of some of the activities your child will encounter in Primary 1. There are many others included within project work.

There are opportunities for visitors coming into school to help develop links with learning, the wider community and finding out about the world of work. We also provide occasional trips outwith school, all of which provide an interesting and stimulating environment in which your child can learn and develop as an individual.

FAMILY LEARNING

Your child will reflect on their learning along with the class teacher each week. This is recorded in their weekly learning log on Microsoft TEAMS and accessed at home (more information on how to do this to follow) for you to view and discuss with your child at home. A parental leaflet with an overview of what your child is learning will be sent out at the start of each term with ways you can help support your child's learning at home. The class teacher will explain this further during introductory sessions.

We are always interested to hear from parents who have an interest they would like to share with pupils in school. Please do let us know if you would be interested in sharing your skills with us.

Reporting on your child's progress may happen informally at any time and you do not need to wait until parents evening to request a meeting with your child's teacher. During term 1, there will be an opportunity to have a parent's appointment with the class teacher, usually before starting full days. There is a whole school parents evening in term 2 to share progress, a written report is sent out in term 3 and an open evening in term 4 to share in pupils learning journey, also with the option of an individual appointment.

If you have any queries or concerns relating to the school, please contact the Senior Management Team.

Important dates such as holiday and term dates, school brochures and development plans as well as the school menu, can be found on the school website – www.aith.shetland.sch.uk

(SCOTTISH) NATIONAL STANDARDISED ASSESSMENTS (NSA)

Since 2017, children in P1, P4, P7 and S3 in Scotland complete online assessments in literacy and numeracy. Children take the assessments once during the school year. There is no set timetable – individual teachers and schools decide when they will happen for each class and school.

ILLNESS

If your child becomes unwell at school, we will contact you so that you can collect and take them home. If you are not available, then an emergency contact is notified. We *strongly recommend* that if your child is ill, home is the best place until they have fully recovered. Sickness and diarrhoea can spread easily, please stay off school for 2 days after their symptoms have gone. For more guidance on a variety of ailments, please consult [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/when-to-call-the-doctor/) .



If your child is involved in an accident which necessitates immediate medical attention, they will be taken to the Doctor or hospital. You will be notified immediately, and we will ask you to accompany your child if this is at all possible. Please ensure if any changes are made to emergency contact details or your own phone numbers, that the school office is notified.

MEDICATION

The administration of medication to pupils is not a teacher's duty. (Staff must volunteer then receive training).

If your child needs long-term medication, or has a chronic condition, please contact the school. A health care plan will be prepared in consultation with you and medical professionals.

If your child is recovering from a short-term illness but needs to finish a course of medicine, a request form must be completed by yourself. This is Local Authority Policy. The school office and school website have copies of these forms. The policy is in place to protect the interests of all involved.

NOTIFICATION

The school would appreciate a **note/phone call** from home if your child:

- is absent – **the School Office will contact you if a call has not been received by 9.30am** on the day of absence
- has to go to the dentist, doctor, specialist etc
- will not be taking PE for a medical reason
- is not going straight home from school, e.g. going to a relative or friend's house (transport providers **must** be informed of any change, by a parent - this is not the teacher's responsibility)
- any other event varying from normal.

COLLECTING AND DROPPING OFF

If your child arrives late to school, please report to the school office before they return to class.

If you need to drop off items for your child during the school day, these should also be brought to the office.

If you are collecting your child before the end of the school day, the school office should always be your first point of contact. Office staff will then contact the class teacher and ensure your child is signed out correctly.

Following these procedures helps minimise disruption to learning, ensures lunch and milk arrangements are accurate, and allows us to maintain correct numbers in the event of an emergency, such as a fire alarm. To support the safety and wellbeing of all children, we kindly ask that all parents and carers report to the school office on arrival if visiting the school at any time during the day.

DINNER AND MILK MONEY

Every child in Scotland is entitled to **free school lunches** in Primaries 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. However, milk must still be paid for via ParentPay.

Information will be emailed to you from platform@parentpay.com regarding how to activate your parentpay account and also with reminders to pick your child's lunches on a weekly basis.

Dinner is served in the school canteen and staff are there to support pupils (making choices, using cutlery etc). If your child is not eating their school dinner, we'll let you know.

Primary children receive a glass of milk at the morning break. **This will be charged at £1.25 per week and is due for payment at the beginning of each Term.** Please let the school know if your child does not want to take milk, as water is available.

If you feel that your income warrants free meals, free milk and/or a clothing grant you can obtain an application form from Children's Services, School Meals Service, Hayfield House (Telephone 01595 743845), from the school office or there is a link to the SIC website on the school website.



we are eating our dinner

SCHOOL DETAILS



Name:	Aith Junior High School
Address:	Aith, Shetland ZE2 9NB
Phone:	Bixter (01595) 807400
E-Mail address:	aith@shetland.gov.uk
School Website:	www.aith.shetland.sch.uk
Head Teacher:	Mr Michael Spence
Depute Head Teacher:	Mr James D Garrick

CONCLUSION:

We hope you have found this information useful, if there are any other questions you may have, please do get in touch. Remember, the smaller the child, the bigger the problem seems - don't let it grow.

Parental engagement is shown, through research, to have a significant positive effect on raising pupil achievement. Parents have the greatest influence on the achievement of young people through supporting their learning in the home.

We aim for families and teachers to work together to improve learning and make your child's school years a time where they can reach their full potential.

Finally, your interest and encouragement are crucial to your child's progress throughout school.