



Mrs J McGinlay  
Head Teacher



BELL'S BRAE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
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<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sh/bellsbraeprimary/>

12<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Parents/carers

### Happy New Year

We would like to wish you all a Happy New Year and best wishes for 2024. Although the weather was very blustery during the holidays, we hope that you enjoyed time spent with your family.

### Thank you

A huge thank you to all parents/carers, family members and friends who supported pupils and staff in the lead up to Christmas by either watching performances, making a donation and above all else providing kind words of support and encouragement. Your continued support is extremely valued by staff and pupils.

### Up-Helly-Aa

We are fast approaching Up-Helly-Aa day. On the morning of Tuesday 30 January, a number of classes including nursery may go down to the street to see the Jarl Squad and galley. We would be delighted with some volunteers to accompany the children. Any parents or grandparents willing to accompany classes at 0900 on Up-Helly-Aa day should notify the school office by 21 January so we can allocate volunteers and ensure there are enough helpers for all classes to attend this community event.

### Winter Weather

Just a reminder that information about school closures due to bad weather will be announced on local and national radio – Radio Shetland at 5.30pm, Radio Orkney at 7.30am and SIBC. However parents/carers are responsible at all times for deciding whether to send their children to school. Parents/carers can follow alerts on twitter. A direct link to this can be accessed through the Shetland Islands Council home page [www.shetland.gov.uk](http://www.shetland.gov.uk) click on twitter 'follow @shetIslandsCll' button at the top right corner of the page. We will also add updates to our school website: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sh/bellsbraeprimary/>

Suitable footwear and warm clothing (including a jacket) are encouraged throughout this term as when the weather allows children are encouraged to go outside for fresh air and exercise.

Please keep us informed of any changes to phone numbers or emergency contacts.

### Pupil Absences/Appointments

Parents/carers are asked to **report all absences**, between 0830 and 0930, on each day of absence. The Scottish Government advises that where the school does not receive notification from parents/carers, pupils absence will be recorded as 'truancy'.

Where the school has not been informed of an absence, staff will endeavour to contact parents/carers/emergency contacts before 1030 to ensure they are aware that their child is not at school and to confirm the reason for their absence.

If parents/carers cannot be contacted, the absence will be referred to the school management team who will decide on the most appropriate action to take. If a child is still unannounced for at **1100** we will pass this on to Duty Social Work.

Schools are legally obliged to keep records of both authorised and unauthorised absences and these are reported annually to the Scottish Government. Requests for planned absences should be submitted on a [Pupil Absence Form](#).

If you are unsure of the recommended exclusion period for specific illnesses please refer to the poster below:

[https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sh/public/bellsbraeprimary/uploads/sites/2267/2018/12/Guidance\\_on\\_infection\\_control\\_in-schools\\_poster-1.pdf](https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sh/public/bellsbraeprimary/uploads/sites/2267/2018/12/Guidance_on_infection_control_in-schools_poster-1.pdf)

### Diary Dates

Up Helly Aa holiday	Wednesday 31 January
Long weekend	Friday 23 February and Monday 26 February
Easter holiday	Friday 29 March – Friday 12 April inclusive
Occasional Holiday	Monday 20 May
School closes	Friday 28 June

Yours sincerely

**Julia McGinlay**

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