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Fair Isle Primary School News

You might remember that we are doing a photography topic based on Fair Isle this term. The weather of late has stopped us being out and about with our cameras but here are some beautiful shots taken by our creative stars. We have also been teaming this with mapwork and coordinates learning in Maths so, if you like a quiz, read on.

This reminds me of
sunshine in Fair Isle on a
boring, winter's day.



Out of all the photos I
have taken so far, this
is my favourite.



Khalicee (5) and Ander (8)

Coordinates Challenge:

What are the coordinates for?

North Lighthouse.

South Lighthouse.

Don Dog.

The Wind Turbines.

Mousey at Houll.

Sheep.

Puffin.

Well done for creating such a beautiful and mathematical map!



NO SERVICE IN THE CHAPEL THIS WEEK

Da (Running) Week Dat's Awa

Monday

The cat is still refusing to go outside. Jimmy has kindly dropped off parcels from The Good Shepherd that wait in the porch as I leave an increasingly chilly classroom and wonder, as the raindrops grow seemingly thicker through the bitter air, if I should go for a run. Four or so miles later, as I descend toward Stackhoull with the stars surprising me, there is a flurry of traffic as the unsung heroes of the electricity crew head up to sort out another power cut. One feels for Deryk after a presumably rough crossing to Grutness. As I shuffle up the hill toward home, with the chapel ghostly illuminated to my left, it seems cruel that we are only on Monday.

Total: 5.4 miles in 43:30.

Spotify Soundtrack: Heroes by David Bowie.

Tuesday

I have always been suspicious of treadmills. Gyms are places, in my mind anyway, where lurk those overly-shouty explosions of testosterone. Into my Room 101 go personal trainers who yell at people who perhaps just want to feel healthy. But the treadmill it is tonight. Since moving to Fair Isle, I have always adhered to Shaw Wisdom and that wisdom told me I would need one. Inside school, Hollie and Amy say this is an especially relentless spell of wind. An hour it is. I plug myself in, in more ways than one, and complete four sets of six-minute reps with some warming up and cooling down. The room is a swimming pool of sweat as I head downstairs, grateful to Robert and Fiona for the fresh veg.

Total: 8.2 miles in 60 minutes.

Spotify Soundtrack: Times Like These by Foo Fighters.

Wednesday

Deryk waves cheerfully at me from the pickup as I descend the hill at Setter. It is Wednesday and it is January and I am running in the daylight. My body seems surprised. A not insignificant group of people are pretending to be Vikings and this means all the schools are shut. Tradition should always be respected, but it should never be above scrutiny. It feels good watching the waves crash against Bunes as I move toward the Obs. One enjoyable yet grounding feature of Fair Isle running is the sensation of the wind on your back coupled with the knowledge you will have to turn around at some point, when it will then proceed to batter your cheekbones. Still, I am grateful to be outside.

Total: 5.6 miles in 40:10.

Soundtrack: Stop the Rock by Apollo 440.

Thursday

The first time I ran on a treadmill, I fell off. Comically. Painfully. And in a way very much in keeping with those internet videos where you see people faceplant the revolving belt and wonder who would be idiotic enough to do it. I said on Tuesday I have always been suspicious of them, but the January winds persists and the rain prefers a horizontal approach this evening so here I am again. With the cat watching me, I set off again on the machine.

Total: 4.8 miles in 38 minutes

Spotify Soundtrack: Brimful of Asha by Cornershop.

Friday

The children in school are finally content in allowing me to say January is nearly over. There is hail pounding the window both here and in mainland Shetland as I chat to our lovely HT, Christie, who has just read the children a story via video link. Teaching never stands still but reading children a good story is an outpost that still endures. Friday is my one day off running but not exercise as, later that day, I shortcut through school to join yoga. Eileen, as she so often is, is right in saying that a sociable fun workout with pals beats the January blues and Alice's sessions are a wonderful way to end the working week. I lock up school and suffer the long commute home.

Spotify Soundtrack: Hymn for the Weekend by Coldplay.

Saturday

It is, contrary to what you might read on the internet, exactly 4.1 miles on the road from North to South Lighthouse (if you go down the west road upon reaching the fire station). The wind is still sweeping in as I wait for my watch to locate a GPS signal. Iain is loading the fuel cubes, and I allow him a headstart as we both head north. Including my first ever day on Fair Isle, back in March and guided by Jonnie, I have run "To the Lighthouse" a total of seventy-four times. I decide Virginia Woolf would approve. A lull in the summer months stalled this running tally. "Here be Skuas" is a phrase to make runners new to Fair Isle wary. Enough of the literary references – this half marathon in May won't train for itself and I need to go faster today. Total: 8 miles in 53 minutes.

Spotify Soundtrack: Come with Me Now by KONGOS.

Sunday

The running week for me ends on a Sunday. With Jimmy's wisdom regarding the presbyterian inclination to rest on the sabbath still fresh in my mind, I once again pull on my trainers and head outside. To the Lighthouse - number seventy-five. The wind is still ferocious and cold. The route to and from North light, one I have come to love, keeps me honest enough, with my mile markers mentally mapped by place and not name: the sweep of the bend before the railings, Tommy's wire-puffin at the top of the second climb and North Light itself (after a lap of it). A hot shower and a new school week await, albeit most likely without our planned trip due to more poor weather. Such is life as a Fair Isle teacher. We have booked reserve dates in March.

Total: 6.2 miles in 48.40. Weekly Total: 38.2 miles.

Spotify Soundtrack: Common People by Pulp.

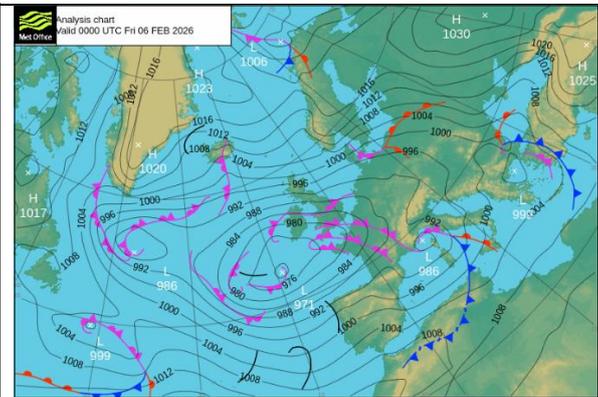
Postscript

People often tell me, when I suggest group runs or simply running itself, that they fear being too slow. Speed when running is a relative concept and comparing yourself to other runners is a rabbit hole best avoided. Everyone's running or fitness journey is personal to them. Mine is. I only started running at the age of 22 when a university friend said I resembled Boris Johnson (the comparison was merited – see the first picture below). Fourteen years later (see second picture) and I like to think I don't resemble any Prime Minister of the last decade or so. If you are thinking of dabbling in running as 2026 begins then I encourage and cheer you on - there are more of us with running shoes than you think in Fair Isle.

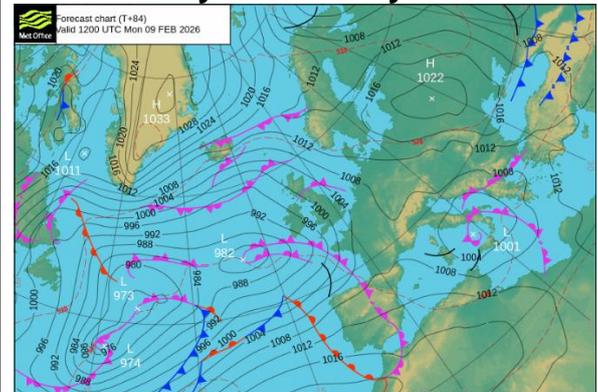
Jonathan – Schoolhouse.



FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



**Analysis Chart 0000 UTC
Friday 6th February 2026**



**Forecast Chart 1200 UTC
Monday 9th February 2026**

GENERAL SITUATION **Friday 6th February 2026**

The persistent 'blocking' anticyclone remains over Scandinavia and low pressure southwest of the British Isles with the strong, cold and cloudy south-easterly airflow persisting across northeast Scotland and the Northern Isles. Weakening fronts are expected to move north over the area during the weekend. As both low pressure and high pressure are predicted to change little a mainly south-easterly airflow is expected to persist through much of this outlook though easing later.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Cold today with temperatures 3° or 4° by day, 2° or 3° overnight' The weekend less cold with temperatures 4° to 6° by day, 5° overnight.

FRIDAY 6th: A cloudy mostly dry day with chance of some brightness in the afternoon. F4-5 ESE winds. Cloudy overnight with outbreaks of sleet then rain later. F4 ESE winds freshening F5-6. **Sea State:** Mostly rough at SE 3 metre.

SATURDAY 7th: Cloudy with outbreaks of rain or drizzle and misty at times with low cloud. F6 SE

winds. **Sea State:** Mostly rough at SE 3 to 4 metre.

SUNDAY 8th: Cloudy and windy with rain or drizzle, occasionally heavy. F6-7 SE winds. **Sea State:** Rough or very rough at SE 3 to 5 metre

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK. Temperature 6° by day 4° overnight at first, a couple of degrees colder from midweek.

MONDAY 9th: Cloudy with patchy rain, perhaps heavy at times. Strong SE winds. **Sea State:** Mostly rough at SE 3 metre.

TUESDAY 10th: Cloudy though drier. Strong SE winds. **Sea State:** Mostly moderate at SE 2 metre.

WEDNESDAY 11th– SUNDAY 15th : Colder and cloudy with mainly light sleet or snow showers. Strong SE winds easing. **Sea State Wednesday:** Mainly moderate at E or NE 2 metre.

Dave Wheeler

HAPPY NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: *After a terrible spell of winter weather (I think EVERYONE here is fed up of south-easterlies and sleet) with very little relief, today we were blessed with somewhat of a given day: a break in the weather allowing 3 flights in and out bringing much missed friends and family, mail and lots of delicious fresh goods for Stackhull Stores. Yes, we choose to live on an island in the North Sea, but still we are very much at the will of the weather here and no doubt hearts and spirits will have been lifted today. At least we can now see the lengthening days starting to stretch out! Here's hoping the rest of winter is a little kinder to us all.*

Eileen at Houll