

FAIR ISLE TIMES

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Fair Isle Primary School News

It is not long until the Easter Holidays here at Fair Isle Primary School. Next week, we have a trip to mainland Shetland organised with swimming lessons, trips to the climbing wall, visits to Sandwick and even a trip to the dentist on the itinerary. It's going to be action-packed!

Meanwhile, here "back at base", we were delighted to welcome Dave Wheeler into school this week. This was after we had completed work contrasting our location here in Fair Isle to another island location (see Luca and Ander's fabulous writing from last week). Dave spent a lot of time at home putting



together a fascinating PowerPoint all about his time in South Georgia and we loved listening to him and perusing all the brilliant pictures of the stunning scenery and fascinating landscapes (although we're still a bit scared of the Leopard Seal!

Thank you so much for coming to visit us, Dave – we love welcoming members of the community into our school.

Now for something completely different.

We know you love reading our writing but we sometimes forget to show you the maths we've been doing. This week has been all about that tricky topic of division. Luca would love to see if you can solve the "perfect

number” problem that he took down during some work on factors and Ander has been busy looking at that tricky subject of remainders and how to use them in context. Super Maths learning all round.

60
 1 and 60
 2 and 30
 3 and 20
 4 and 15
 5 and 12
 6 and 10

52
 1 and 52
 2 and 26
 4 and 13

64
 1 and 64
 2 and 32
 4 and 16
 8 and 8

$3 \overline{) 152} \begin{matrix} 50 \\ 10 \\ 2 \end{matrix}$

$12 \overline{) 52} \begin{matrix} 4 \\ 4 \\ 0 \end{matrix}$

1:56 find the common factors of 56 and 96

56
 1 and 56
 2 and 28
 4 and 14
 7 and 8

96
 1 and 96
 2 and 48
 3 and 32
 4 and 24
 6 and 16
 8 and 12

$32 \overline{) 96} \begin{matrix} 3 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{matrix}$ $12 \overline{) 96} \begin{matrix} 8 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{matrix}$

$16 \overline{) 96} \begin{matrix} 6 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{matrix}$ $7 \overline{) 96} \begin{matrix} 13 \\ 6 \\ 0 \end{matrix}$

Jonathan's Perfect Number Problem
 A perfect number is a number where, when you add all its factors together (apart from itself), you get the number itself as the answer.
 6 is a perfect number. $1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ (no other factors other than itself).
 There is only one more perfect number less than 100. Can you find it?

28

 So who's perfect?

3. Three tennis balls can fit into one can. How many cans are needed to hold 16 balls?
 $5 \text{ r } 1$ you need 6 cans ✓

6. Mr Jimbob has 11 children in his class next year. He needs them to have 4 pencils each. Pencils come in boxes of 10. How many boxes will he need to buy?
 $44 \div 10 = 4 \text{ r } 4$
 he needs 5 boxes ✓

5. Ten friends want to visit a museum. A taxi holds 3 people. How many taxis will they need?
 $10 \div 3 = 3 \text{ r } 1$ ✓
 4 taxis are needed

4. One box of cat food will last my cat four days. How many boxes will I need for 22 days?
 $22 \div 4 = 5 \text{ r } 2$
 6 boxes are needed ✓

2. There is 26ml left in a bottle of medicine. Each spoonful holds 4ml. How many spoonfuls are left in the bottle?
 $26 \div 4 = 6 \text{ r } 2$
 6 spoonfuls (✓) ✓

ISLE NOTICES

- **Fair Isle Demonstration and Research MPA:** we are planning for Shaun Fraser from UHI Shetland to give a talk on Fair Isle fisheries research at the hall on Wednesday 18th March at 7.30pm. To be confirmed early next week depending on weather. All very welcome.
- **April closures at Tingwall Airport.** Michael Craigie (SIC Executive Manager of Transport Operations) has confirmed that Tingwall Airport will be closed for flights on 4 days next month: Friday 17th and Monday 20th April and again on Friday 24th and Monday 27th April. This is due to essential runway works which are being done soon before weekend flights and the busy summer season.
- No **Chapel** this weekend
- **Fair Isle Development Company and Fair Isle Committee AGMs** – Monday 16th March in the Hall Committee Room – 7pm until 9pm. Angus Murray and Clea Warner from NTS are due to be in the isle Monday pm to Wednesday pm. If weather permits they will attend part of the FIC meeting to give an update.
- **Nethertaft house and Taft croft soon available.** NTS in partnership with the Scottish Land Matching Service are delighted to welcome applications from prospective new crofters to the isle. Families and those with crofting and trades experience are especially invited to apply: <https://slms.scot/fair-isle/>
- **Our very own Steven Wilson** is starring in an advert for Stella Artois (other brands of lager are available!) See the ad here, we think it's great! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmmaIM07xLU>

Da week dat's awa... This week we hear from Angela, who first came to the isle last summer to volunteer at Koolin and Springfield, later helping at the Obs as a domestic volunteer in their busy autumn period.

Since returning to Fair Isle I have been helping Steven with Springfield Croft and loving every minute of it. Although my professional career was as a Developmental Psychologist and Psychodynamic Counsellor, I have always wanted to live the farming life. My ancestors were crofters and horse trainers in Ireland until the late 1800s and before that were Vikings who landed in Orkney. So my longing to live a crofting life on a small remote island is in my DNA.

The closest that I had experienced country living until last year was having horses in my life since I was born and attending agricultural college down south in my 20s. However, due to life circumstances and caring responsibilities it was not an option for me to pursue a new way of life until last year. At that point I set myself the goal of establishing a more natural way of living by my 50th birthday (this summer), which led me to begin volunteering through WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) last year to gain a range of farming experience. That's what first brought me to Fair Isle last summer, to volunteer with Steven. It was an incredibly rewarding experience that became so much more than helping on a croft. Steven also taught me how to fish and being so warmly welcomed by the island community felt very humbling. It was such a special experience to see how the island community came together to help each other bale the haylage and to bring the flocks off Sheep Hill, and I was invited to be part of that. It was also an extra bonus to volunteer at the Bird Observatory, joining a special team and meeting guests from around the world. So the opportunity to come back to beautiful Fair Isle and learn first-hand about the crofting life is the best gift ever.

My day begins with feeding the sheep with their nuts then putting out fresh haylage for them. The flock come for breakfast when you call them and some are confident enough to eat nuts from your hand. One ewe, named Tallulah, has a very extrovert personality and will approach you with or without feed and even let you stroke her head. Whilst the sheep are eating their nuts I put out the haylage for them. The Shetland sheep tend to be a bit shy and don't seem to be interested in eating the nuts, but they do enjoy the bales. I noticed that they tend to hang back when the bigger girls are feeding, so I have started spreading the haylage out in several bundles, just like we do when feeding horses in the field, so that the groups of ewes gathering around the haylage is smaller and the wee Shetlands find it easier to find a space to join them. This seems to be working well and the Shetlands are coming to eat haylage every morning and even waiting in the paddock for it being put out. I plan to go down to the beach to gather some seaweed this weekend as Steven said the Shetlands may naturally enjoy that too.

When I go out to start the morning routine I'm usually accompanied by Miss Ash (the sheepdog) and Lady Marmalade (one of the cats), who walk with me and wait while I'm feeding the sheep. We're also joined by the flock of 7 chickens, who either run to join us when they see us or are sometimes waiting at the front door (and looking through the window) watching for us coming out. So I end up looking like The Pied Piper as I walk about the croft followed by a dog, a cat and line of 7 chickens!



Usually it is a very peaceful way to start the day, but one morning turned into something from a comedy sketch. When I went out that morning the sheep were grazing far over to the left of the croft, in the field near the coastline. Assuming that sheep were creatures of habit, I thought I'd call them at that point to give them time to make their way across the fields following their usual path while I filled their big tub of nuts to put in the troughs. How wrong I was! When I called to them, all their heads came up and the flock started running towards me the way the crow

flies, using the most direct route possible. So you can imagine the scene as that meant I had a flock of sheep hopping over the dyke into the walled garden with the chicken coop (called Chicken Palace), trotting through the garden and hopping over the dyke at the other side to get into the same field as me. Meanwhile, I'm shouting and signalling with my arms "*No, no, the other way!*" to obviously no avail. Ash was looking at me and all these sheep hopping over the wall as if you say "Do you want me to sort the situation?" I was taught a lesson that morning I won't forget!

After feeding the sheep each morning, I then take a tub of seed with supplements and leftover treats from the kitchen (fruit, veg, cereals etc.) down to Chicken Palace to feed the girls. They sometimes get dried mealworms too as a treat. Steven had built the chickens a big coop last summer along with two other WWOOFers. It is a big secure run that is high enough to walk around in. The hen house with nesting boxes is in there too with plenty of space left for the hens to walk around. I have been giving Chicken Palace a bit of a makeover, re-purposing some wooden brush handles, buoys and a small pallet to give them things to interact with. Steven has also made them an amazing rope ladder and is going to build them a swing! They also now have an arched feeding shelter in the coop too, so that their feed is kept dry and doesn't blow around with the wind. They also have bark and straw on the ground to keep it drier and the girls seem to enjoy digging around in it.

After feeding the chickens I check their nesting boxes for eggs. I have started to notice their laying patterns, with one of the chickens laying an egg by early morning and the other hens laying their eggs between breakfast and their afternoon feed. It's been fascinating to see their egg production increasing as the daylight gets longer. One day they laid 10 eggs!

I've been reading up on chickens and their care, which has been really interesting. I've learned that the calcium in the morning feed is absorbed into the skeleton to strengthen the chicken's bones, while the calcium in the afternoon feed (particularly when fed between 2-5pm) is used for egg formation to make the shells stronger. Also, the colour of the egg yolk is influenced with the diet, with green leaves from veg and plants making the yolks a deeper yellow. I am going to gather some seaweed for the chickens this weekend as well, to see if they like it as an additional source of greens. Steven said I could make a transportable pen to take the chickens to the beach to forage safely for seaweed, grubs and other goodies (like shrimps) under the pebbles themselves. I'll wait until the spring weather comes to take them on their first trip to the seaside

It has been so interesting observing the chickens and getting to know their personalities. I have given them names based on flowers and plants. So far I have named 4 of the 7 chickens using the coloured ring on their ankle to inspire their name and make it easy for me to identify them. They are Bluebell (blue ring), Clover (green ring), Violet (purple ring) and Buttercup (yellow ring). The other 3 hens don't have a ring and haven't been named yet. I'm going to ask Luca, Ander and Khalicee if they would like to choose their names, so watch this space!

After feeding the chickens, my morning routine moves onto visiting Mr Pumpkin (Marmalade's son) in the big shed. He is an outdoor cat but has a really cosy bed in the big shed nestled in the straw bales. So he's always toasty warm and it's a good lookout post for him as it's high enough for him to see out the window to check who is coming into the shed. Although he is a beautiful big boy, like a lion cub, he is also a bit of a scaredy cat and takes his time to trust you. My patience of letting him get used to me at his pace has been rewarded with him now calling to me as I enter the shed and letting me cuddle him while he's purring like a wee engine. He's such a lovable cat and loves having his tummy rubbed while he rolls around. He now often chooses to have a cuddle first before eating his breakfast, which feels special.

Although my morning routine is the same each day, the afternoons are dedicated to a range of tasks. This week I have been helping Steven to dose the sheep, prepare the hay field for spreading oyster shells as a natural fertiliser, cleaning the chicken coop, tidying outbuildings and around the croft. I am learning very quickly that crofting life is always busy with a never-ending to-do list, but feeling very privileged and loving every minute of it.

Two days are never the same and there are also lots of fun things going on at Koolin too. As you probably will know by now, Steven is going to be the new star of Stella Artois, so we had their filming and production crew staying last week. They were such an amazing team of young creatives and watching them work their magic with Steven and all the animals in front of the camera (Lady Marmalade's cat walk in front of the camera was very impressive and she was definitely a natural diva! LOL). The film footage the team captured of the Isle was so stunning, with drone footage around the cliffs and stacks looking like something from Jurassic Park. I can't wait to see the finished advert, due to launch around April. Fingers crossed that the short film is selected for the Cannes Film Festival.

Out-with helping on the croft, I have been adding the finishing touches to Steven's new website that I have been building for him since my first visit to the Isle. If you fancy having a browse, please visit www.fairisleaccommodation.com.

I've also started to do background research to learn how to grow organic fruit, veg, edible flowers and herbs in preparation for the kitchen garden and Polycrub that will be developed on the croft this year. Steven also bought me a really special gift: 'The Ancestral Apothecary Seed Chest', so that I can grow a medicinal garden too. I've always loved natural remedies and am so looking forward to creating a natural medicine chest. I could write all day about my week dat's awa and the interesting things each day brings, but will stop there for now.

With kindness,
Angela



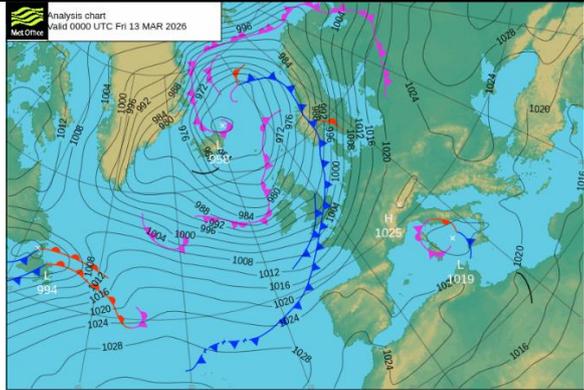
Start 'em young!!



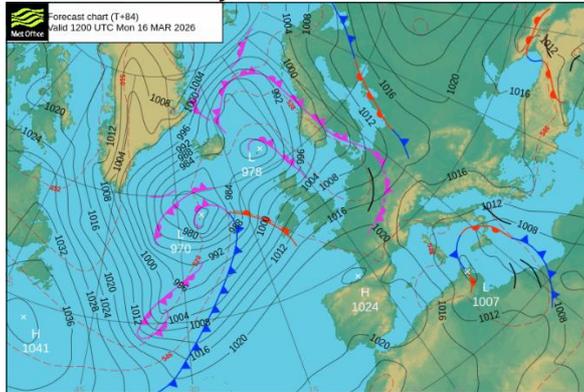
Good to see that the next Robert Mitchell is getting his training in down in Manchester...

Thanks to granny Fiona for the photos of Teddy practicing granddad's trade

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



Analysis Chart 0000 UTC
Friday 13th March 2026



Forecast Chart 1200 UTC
Monday 16th March 2026

GENERAL SITUATION Friday 13th March 2026

A depression east of Iceland results in a strong cooler and showery airflow across northern Scotland. This eases through Saturday before a new depression, tracking east south of Iceland brings a strong to gale southerly airflow later Sunday. This veers westerly on Monday as fronts clear east then strong south-westerly for Tuesday and Wednesday as low pressure moves away over the Norwegian Sea. High pressure is predicted to then build across the Northern Isles bringing a quieter end to the week.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND Temperatures 6° or 7° by day, 3° to 5° overnight.

FRIDAY 13th: Clear spells and blustery showers, occasionally heavy, with chance of hail through the evening and overnight. F6 SW'ly winds, easing a little later in the night. **Sea State:** In the west very rough at SW 4 to 5 metre. East of Shetland rough at SSW 3 to 4 metre.

SATURDAY 14th: Sunny spells and heavy showers again with risk of hail and perhaps thunder. F5-6 SW'ly winds easing. **Sea State:** In the west very rough at W 4 to 5 metre. East of Shetland rough at SW 3 to 4 metre.

SUNDAY 15th: Rain in the morning, clearing to sunny spells and heavy showers by afternoon. F6-7 S winds occasionally gale F8 veering SSW F6 for the afternoon. **Sea State:** Mostly rough at SW 3 to 4 metre. East of Shetland rough at S 3 metre

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK Temperature 7° or 8° by day, perhaps 9° later. 5° or 6° overnight.

MONDAY 16th: Sunshine and showers, rain following later. Milder. **Sea State:** Mostly high at W 6 to 7 metre. East of Shetland rough at WSW 3 to 4 metre.

TUESDAY 17th: Cloudy with occasional rain. Strong to gales S'ly winds. **Sea State:** Mostly rough or very rough at SW 4 or 5 metre. East of Shetland moderate or rough at SW 2 to 3 metre.

WEDNESDAY 18th – SUNDAY 22nd: Mostly dry though often cloudy with moderate WSW winds falling light later. **Sea State Wednesday:** Mostly very rough at SW 4 to 5 metre. East of Shetland moderate or rough at SW 2 to 3 metre.

Dave Wheeler

