

Burra Parent Council

Minutes of Meeting of Burra Parent Council held online on Wednesday 19th November 2025 at 6.30pm.

Present: Jennifer Nicolson (Chairperson)
Denise Duncan (Vice-Chairperson)
Chris Goodier (Parent)
Ellyn Hutchison (Parent)
Jill Irvine (Parent)
Laura Johnson (Parent)
Judy Priest (Parent)
Amy Williamson (Parent)

In Attendance: Suzanne Inkster (Clerk)
Helen Robertson (Head Teacher)

Notice of Meeting

Jennifer welcomed everyone to the meeting on Teams.

Apologies

No Apologies received.

Approve Minutes

Minutes of meeting held on 28th August 2025 were approved by Helen and seconded by Jennifer.

Christmas Hamper Fundraiser

Each primary class will provide a Christmas hamper to be raffled at the Christmas concert. Previous funds raised for this have been around £1000. This year any funds raised will help pay for Christmas at Hamnavoe. Examples of some of the costs incurred at Christmas time are - buying the rights to the concert (approx £70), gifts for the bairns, party items, and some extras for the Christmas dinner. A new PA system with microphones have been purchased to improve sound at concerts and assemblies. Christmas trees are old now so 2 new ones will be purchased.

Raffle tickets will be sold at the concert by the parent council. Jennifer, Jill, Amy, Denise and Laura have volunteered to do this and are requested to be there at 5.30pm. Concert will start at 6pm.

Staffing

Helen said this term has been very challenging with regards to staffing. The school has been short of staff and have had to ask for volunteers to come in. Some updates:

- There is a new Learning Support Worker post (25hrs per week). Alicia Stewart has been appointed and will begin after Christmas holidays.
- Mrs Scott will be starting a new job in the new year so currently looking for a replacement for her.
- Julia going on maternity leave at Christmas time and started looking to recruit for that position.
- There are 12 hours of PEF funding money allocated to supporting literacy and numeracy. A special talking and listening project is being run by Mrs Scott currently. Pupil are identified for this additional support through progress tracking meetings and achievement data.
- There are 4 hours of additional support available from the outreach team. Gillian Isbister and Stuart Club will be coming to support this.
- Play support worker post for 10 hours has been advertised recently. It has not been filled.

Recruitment is a very slow process, and it is often 6 weeks before a vacant post is advertised. There are some temporary staff in position for the new year while the recruitment is worked through.

Discussion was held around PVG for volunteers in the school. Helen informed that there is no requirement to have this providing you are in the room with the teacher. However, PVG can be acquired if the volunteer wishes. Anyone running after school clubs need to have a PVG in place. Laura suggested having a volunteer induction policy to show to volunteers who come to help at school. Helen will investigate this.

AOCB

Jennifer raised that some parents have been in touch about school dinners again (portion sizes, lack of choice, repetitive menu and some bairns coming home hungry). Jennifer will be discussing this at the Bi-annual Chairpersons meeting. It was suggested that we could survey our own parent forum for their opinions. It was agreed to put this back on the agenda for our next meeting.

Helen updated the group on the School Improvement Plan.

- There is daily reading for enjoyment of at least 15 mins every day. P7 is charting this progress. They have applied for a school reading award and have started our own weekly reading awards.
- There is a plan to have a couple of film nights at the school with pupils and families in Term 3.
- All teaching staff have been trained in anti-bullying practices. Support staff will be trained in February 2026.

- PEF funding is being used to support literacy and numeracy for pupils with significant gaps in their learning.

The 'Breakfast Rolls' fundraiser is being planned for the spring term.

Helen asked for feedback on the recent disruption to school transport due to the snow. Helen is usually informed around 7am but today had to chase for information. She has informed the local authority that communication on this is required more promptly. Helen suggested it would be helpful to use the parent council chat to share information on weather/roads around Burra. Laura suggested having weather contingency information on the school blog. This has been acted on. See Parent Information Tab.

Parent evenings will be held next week.

Helen informed the parent council that there has been staff absence at the Foula Primary School since October. As a result, she has had to be preparing work for these pupils. The school has remained open every day, and pupils were taught every day. It was agreed to add the Shared Headship to the agenda for our next meeting to discuss how Helen is finding this role.

A few parents have mentioned splitting the playground at breaktime to protect the younger pupils from any inappropriate behaviour of older pupils. The last time this was done was during COVID. Overall, there was a reluctance to do this again and that most pupils preferred being all together. Helen mentioned that Alesha Stewart the new LSW has taken on some playground supervision hours, but Helen is still having to fill the other hours herself.

The new behaviour rules implemented seem to be working well. Staff are happier with this new approach.

Date of Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on **Monday 9th March at 6pm.**