

Head Teacher's Report - April 2024

I feel that Term 3 was a very successful term for Dunrossness. I feel that particular successes were our shared learning event, our parent lunches and SMUHA.

I also want to note my appreciation for our parent helpers in the library, they are making tremendous progress and there is a real difference in the library.

Staffing

Miss Lisa Davies has started with us in ELC as a Practitioner – she is covering Miss Curstaidh MacKay's Maternity leave and will be with us until February 2025.

Miss Kathryn Moar will continue with us for the remainder of the school year, she will teach Primary 6/7 3 days a week alongside myself and will teach music on Thursdays.

Mrs Jeanna Inkster has resigned from her post as music teacher, she has returned from her career break to Sandwick Junior High School 3 days a week, teaching secondary only. I have not heard how the recruitment process will pan out at this stage.

Mr Trevor Jamieson was our preferred candidate for the Janitor role, he has been in the school for a while now on a supply basis and is getting to know the staff, bairns and building.

2024/25

I am starting to think about classes for next year. We have 10 primary 7 pupils leaving and 15 primary 1s coming in. This will increase our school roll to 89, meaning that we will stay at 4 classes, they will be large. The school has had enquiries from another family, meaning we may have 2 more pupils joining up the school (bringing the school roll to 91). With this in mind my current thoughts are:

Primary 1/2 – with 21 pupils

Primary 2/3/4 with 22 pupils

Primary 4/5/6 with 23/possibly 24 pupils

Primary 6/7 with 23/possibly 24 pupils

As always, the classes are being set on age predominantly, however there are a couple of instances where we will be trying to keep siblings in different classes, so these are families that I will speak to individually to discuss their situation.

SIP Evaluations

I will very soon be starting to evaluate the current School Improvement Plan. This year there have been 2 improvement priorities:

Raising attainment in numeracy and writing through increased pupil involvement

Improving inclusion, pupil participation and motivation

I plan to set up a consultation at our Learner Led event in May where I would hope that we have many parents across the door that I can have a chat with.

2024/25 Plans

This term I will be starting to think about our priorities for next year, again I will be consulting with parents in May. Initial thoughts are that we will be looking at:

Respect – this will allow us to look at the environment, respect for resources and respect for each other.

Moderation Cycle – this is a very 'teachery' part of our improvement, but important. I want to make this accessible for our staff, bairns and families. The Moderation Cycle helps us plan, assess and moderate our learning in a consistent way.

ELC – meeting the needs of all learners. ELC is a challenging place, with 37 pupils registered. There is a high level of need in the setting, and we have struggled for staff. We are now fully staffed, with 45 hours of ASN fully filled, which means we feel that we will be able to drive things forward at long last!

I would be keen to set up a CHIP again (Children's Improvement Plan) which will allow the pupils to have a real voice in our improvements too.

Buildings

The sound boards for the hall have now been chosen, and the request for work has gone through. It is thought it will be the summer holidays before they are installed.

We have had major issues with the sewers on the east side of the school, we have had continual blockages, and with investigation, it was found about a foot of pipe had crumbled. The original plan was for a quick fix over the holidays, but as they got started, it was found to be in need of a much bigger repair. The whole pipe along the east side of the school has now been replaced, leaving us with quite a muddy mess, but we will get grass seed organised and in over the spring.

Finally, we are still no further ahead with the crumbling blocks in the huts down in the peerie end of the school. We had a delegation of council folk in the school at the beginning of March, but I have not heard a final decision about what they are going to do. It is hoped that we might be able to address some of our suitability issues at the same time.

Funding

I have applied to the Zetland Trust to help support the playground renovations. I put in a bid for the resources required to go inside the poly tunnels, I will let you know if we are successful.

Louise Leslie, Acting Head Teacher.

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