

Glaitness School

An inclusive, safe and secure community of pupils



Education is for all

Learners of all ages can expect to access a high quality education irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, ability, disability or social background
(from the Education Service's vision, values and aims)

'The education authority is committed to the delivery of inclusive provision for all children'
(Extract from OIC Policy on Support for Learning)

'Glaitness school supports the principle of addressing individual learning needs by attempting to remove any barriers to learning that a pupil may experience'
Glaitness School Parent Handbook



About Orkney

Orkney lies about seven miles off the north-east tip of the Scottish mainland and covers an area of just under 100,000 hectares. It consists of 67 islands, 18 of which are inhabited and has a population of around 20,000. The largest island, generally referred to as the Mainland, is home to the majority of the population. Orkney is very green and fertile with a long tradition of beef, dairy, sheep and arable farming

Despite its high latitude Orkney's climate is mild with half the rainfall of the west coast of Scotland. Although it can be stormy at times, with few trees to break up the landscape, the uninterrupted panoramas of the sky are a unique feature. On clear winter nights the stars and constellations offer a wonderful display often enhanced by the Northern Lights, locally known as 'The Merry Dancers'.

Orkney has a palpable sense of community. Musical traditions are strong and Orkney hosts a number of festivals each year, such as the Folk Festival and the prestigious St Magnus Festival, which attracts top-notch international performers from a variety of art forms. Many local people also participate in sports activities through local clubs and collectively in the bi-annual Island Games.

A significant factor is Orkney's growing tourism industry. Many say if you scratch Orkney it bleeds archaeology! From the World Heritage site of Skara Brae's stone age village, viking influences such as St Magnus Cathedral, World War reminders including the Italian Chapel and Scapa Flow, to up-to-the-minute wind and wave energy, Orkney's place in history spans all eras and has much to offer both visitors and inhabitants alike. Other notable industries and activities include fishing, oil processing and handling, aquaculture, jewellery and knitwear manufacture, food processing, quarrying, brewing and distilling.

There are two main towns on the Mainland - Kirkwall in the east (estimated population 7,500) and Stromness in the west (estimated population 2,200).



Orkney has 23 schools: 2 Senior Secondary schools (one with resourced provision for pupils with additional support needs), 4 Junior High schools which have both primary and secondary departments and 17 Primary schools, including Glaitness School which has enhanced provision for pupils with additional support needs. All of these schools are resourced to a very high standard, including the smallest schools on the most remote islands. Pupils transferring from schools in the outer isles complete their education at Kirkwall Grammar School and reside during the week at Papdale Halls of Residence.



About Kirkwall

Kirkwall is the largest town and 'capital' of the Orkney Islands. The town is first mentioned in the Orkneyinga saga in the year 1046. It was the settlement of Rognvald II, Earl of Orkney, who was killed by his successor, Thorfinn. In 1486 King James III of Scotland elevated Kirkwall to the status of a Royal Burgh. The name "Kirkwall" is derived from the Norse name "Kirkjuvagr" meaning "Church bay", this was later corrupted into "Kirkvoe" and then "Kirkwaa". English cartographers mistook the latter part "waa" as the Scots 'wa', meaning wall, hence the name of the town became "Kirkwall".

Situated on the northern coast of Mainland Orkney, Kirkwall is a port with ferry services to many of the other islands in the group.

The town is also the home of the Orkney Library and the main sports and leisure facility (The Pickaquoy Sports Centre) which includes a well equipped cinema. Other amenities in the town include a swimming pool and theatre.



At the heart of the town stands St Magnus Cathedral Britain's most northerly cathedral which can be seen from some distance away. It was founded in memory of Saint Magnus, earl of Orkney from 1108 to 1117. It is presided over by the Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney, though his seat is technically in Aberdeen.

The story of the cathedral's foundation can be found in the Orkneyinga Saga. Uniquely in Britain, it is owned not by the church but by the 'people' as a result of an act of James III of Scotland in 1468.

St Magnus is also the only cathedral in Britain to have its own dungeon. Next to the cathedral are the ruins of the former bishop's palace and earl's palace. (From Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirkwall>)

About Glaitness School

Glaitness School (the recent amalgamation of Glaitness Primary and Glaitness Aurrida Special School) is Orkney's 'flagship' establishment for integrated service provision for pre-school and primary-aged children. It is one of two large primary schools, which serve Orkney's main town of Kirkwall.



Background

A project appraisal, which started in June 2000 and lasted about 18 months, set out to 'address the need to provide additional accommodation for pupils with special educational needs and for primary pupils in the Kirkwall area'. In the subsequent period, consideration was given to a number of options and after extensive consultation and engagement with pupils, parents, staff, and partner agencies, the Glaitness School site was agreed. Work began in earnest in 2004.

Present and Future

The combined school provides an integrated, one-site, one-management establishment. It accommodates mainstream and support classes for all pupils, including those with moderate to severe and complex support needs.

The site is currently being extended to incorporate a new build, together with refurbishment and redesign of the existing buildings to promote the principles and practice of inclusive provision for all pupils. The 'new' school will be an impressive, enhanced and well-resourced state-of-the-art facility. Phase 1 of the programme will be completed by January 2006. Currently the pupil roll sits around 240 (including pre-school).



Phase 1

Phase 1 of the building programme has seen the completion of a range of new accommodation including 8 classes, an admin block, a gymnasium, a medical room, a parent room, a resources room, a sensory room, a soft play area, a staffroom and an internal courtyard.

Phase 2

Work will begin in February 2006 on Phase 2. During this period a dedicated suite of key NHS Orkney services (eg speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy) will be constructed along with an art room, a music room, a library and a support for learning base.

Phase 3

The final Phase 3 will see the refurbishment of the existing 'early years' section of the school.



All Pupils are engaged in a variety of physical, creative, social and educational activities



The new school ethos

Glaitness School seeks to promote an inclusive approach towards all aspects of the life and work of the school, which is employed to develop:

- an individual and collective identity with and pride in the school
- a warm and welcoming environment where everyone's' views, needs and ideas are shared and valued
- a vibrant learning community which meets the needs of every individual
- a safe and secure environment where pupils can develop respect for themselves and others and to take increasing responsibility for themselves and their learning
- a strong and purposeful relationship with parents and the wider community

Staff and School Organisation

The overall staffing complement for the school consists of:

Head Teacher

1 Depute Head Teacher

1 Business Manager

13 'FTE' teachers (including 3 principal teachers and 1 support for learning teacher)

12 support for learning staff

3 early years workers

1 auxiliary staff

1 care assistant

2 bus escorts

2 office staff and

2 janitors

Collectively the staff forms a strong learning community who is seeking an enthusiastic and committed leader to drive the school and authority's vision for this flagship establishment.

For the start of the session 2005-2006, the class structure is as follows:

8 mainstream classes, 4 support classes and a part time nursery class.

Pupils from the school transfer to Kirkwall Grammar School at the end of P7.

There is an active Parent Representative Committee, who have been instrumental in contributing to the shape and design of the new build.

It is anticipated that the head teacher and school staff will be supported by and work closely with officers from the education service sectors - Support for Pupils, Educational Resources and Quality Development. Together with pupils, parents, other agencies and services the school is in a strong position to 'grow' an inclusive and purposeful learning environment.

The school has good links with the other 'large' primary schools within Orkney and the head teachers meet regularly as part of formal and informal cluster arrangements. The school also has regular links with local community and cultural events centred in and around Kirkwall.





Visiting teachers provide specialist tuition in Physical Education, Art and Music to all pupils. Some pupils also receive instrumental tuition provided by a visiting music instructor. Others may receive individual music, speech, occupational or physiotherapy according to their need.



School Aims

These aims which flow from 'How Good is Our School' are clearly set within the context of the National Priorities for Education as well as articulating with the Vision and Values of the local authority.

The Curriculum

- To promote the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding in each of the areas of the 5 - 14 curriculum

Attainment

- To monitor and evaluate pupil progress through a variety of assessment procedures , National Tests, targeted use of standardised tests and Performance Indicators

Learning and Teaching

- To provide a range of positive teaching and learning approaches, experiences and strategies, ensuring pupil progress and attainment is effectively monitored and communicated to parents

Support for pupils

- Through the management of all available resources we aim to ensure all pupils are supported and their efforts respected and valued within the whole school and the wider community

Ethos

- To provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment within which everyone has an equal opportunity to develop self esteem, self worth and a pride in their own achievements and those of others
- To promote a welcoming environment where parents and members of the wider community are encouraged to take an active role in the pupils' learning activities and in the life of the school

Resources

- Appropriate use of resources to make efficient and effective use of available space, making them accessible to staff and pupils

Management, leadership and quality assurance

- Through collaborative planning, liaison and a team approach we aim to involve pupils, parents and staff in the decision making and school development planning processes



Pupils working together in smaller groups with the support of classroom assistants



As a consequence learning and teaching at *Glaitness* is based upon the following key principles:

- All learning should motivate and inspire all learners and thus be both inclusive and enjoyable
- Learning experiences should meet the needs of the whole child and should encourage the development of emotional awareness, self assessment and self esteem
- Provision of a wide range of experiences which nurture and celebrate success
- Flexibility to employ effective and innovative approaches which meet a broad spectrum of varying needs and interests

The school's development agenda for 2005-06

- Developing inclusive practice
 - a) in a holistic sense permeating and influencing all aspects of the work of the school
 - b) specifically in development of the playground and outdoor play experience for all children
- To develop support for pupils
- To develop healthy school meals and snacks and improve dining hall environment
- To develop Travel to school initiative and Junior Road Safety Officer
- To effectively implement procedures within the authority's Excursion Policy

Nursery priorities for 2005 - 6

- Review and develop a profiling system , assessment and record keeping
- Continue to implement the Early Years ICT strategy

