



Shetland Islands Council

# Skeld Primary School

Information Handbook

2023/24



## Welcome to Skeld Primary School

Skeld Primary School is a one teacher primary school that is situated in a small rural crofting community in the West Mainland of Shetland.

The school is a non-denominational school catering for pupils from nursery to P7 – ages 3 to 12.

In the year 2023/24 we have 4 pupils in Primary and 2 in the nursery.

The original school was built in 1877 along with an attached schoolhouse which was used as the school until 1997. This old building has been retained and is now the hall used for P.E., assemblies, concerts and school gatherings. The old schoolhouse now houses the office, staffroom and storage rooms. In 1997 the old building was modernised and a bright and welcoming extension was built. The school now has a purpose built nursery, two classrooms, a multipurpose room used for art and music, a dining room, a library, cloakrooms and wet area facilities. The school has a walled tarmac playground with a stunning view across the sea to Fitful Head, a sheltered area and a separate area for nursery outdoor learning. There is a large grass pitch, a plantation of young trees and an outdoor adventure playground.

*The view from the school*



**We belong, we believe, we enjoy and achieve.**

This handbook provides information for parents for the school year 2023/24. Although the information is correct (August 23), it is possible that changes will occur during the course of the year, which may affect the contents for this year or for the following school years.

For further information or clarification, please contact the school. Throughout this handbook, links to websites are provided for further information. Free access to these pages can be gained at the Shetland Library Learning Centre and at Islesburgh Community Centre. Hard copies and different formats of the handbook (for example in Braille or large print) will be made available by request to the school. Handbooks for all Shetland Islands Council's schools can be found on the council's website. The direct link is:

<http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/SchoolHandbooks.asp>

### **Contact Details**

Name: Skeld Primary School

Address:

Westerskeld,

Skeld,

Shetland,

ZE2 9NL

Telephone: 01595 807480

Email: [skeld@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:skeld@shetland.gov.uk)

[skeld@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:skeld@shetland.gov.uk)

Stages of education:

Nursery, Primary

Roll: Primary 4 ( December 23)

Nursery 2

Denominational status: non-denominational

Head teacher: Mr Stephen Renwick

Chair of the Parent Council: Mr Alan Taylor

Please email the school if you wish to contact the chair of the Parent Council:

Our vision for Skeld Primary is that we are a happy school that thrives on mutual respect with communication at its heart. We work together as a team and collaborate within the setting and with the wider community.

We firmly believe that we need nurturing relationships and are inclusive to all. We engender a love of authentic and child led learning where play and creativity play a major part in what we do. We listen to our learners and wider community and allow innovative thought in all staff and pupils.

We recognise the need for outdoor learning as well as learning for sustainability as this will support the health and wellbeing of all.

The Children came up with both our motto and the following:

Skeld School is a creative school where we like our education and work hard to achieve. The school listens to our suggestions and we work well together as a team. We are good at listening to our teachers and each other. We get outdoors when we can to keep us healthy. We love to come to Skeld School where we learn and have fun.

At Skeld Nursery & Primary School, our values encourage our pupils to be:

**S**uccessful

**K**ind

**E**ngaged

**L**eaders

**D**etermined

## Visiting the school

You are warmly welcomed to visit the school if your child has been offered a place or if you are seeking a place for your child. Please contact the school to make arrangements.

## Communication

Routine communication – staff are available most days before and after school to discuss any aspect of your child’s education. You are welcome to telephone or to speak in person to your child’s teacher. If the teacher is not available they will get back to you as soon as possible.

The Blog and notes home will keep you informed of day to day activities and forthcoming events. We may also communicate with you through the reading record booklet or by personal note – please ensure you check your child’s book bag each day.

### **Urgent communication e.g. school closure**

From time to time, it is necessary to close the school early for various reasons, such as bad weather, or because of water or power failure. Then school holds a list of pupil contact numbers and, should the school have to be closed for any reason, you will be informed by a member of staff. You should ensure that the school is kept updated on any changes e.g. home/emergency contact numbers. If the school is to be closed before the usual opening time you will be contacted from 7am onwards. In the instance of inclement weather school closures will also be announced on SIBC radio, the Shetland News and Shetland Times sites and information can also be found on the SIC website at [Adverse Weather Information – Shetland Islands Council](#)

During periods of snow and ice buses cannot always operate on time, particularly in the morning, though bus operators will make every effort to keep to their schedule. It should be noted, too that the decision to send your child to school in adverse weather conditions rests with yourself, as you will be best able to judge the weather conditions in your home area.

It is most important that you always make emergency arrangements for your child. In severe weather conditions the school may be closed at very short notice, and it is essential that staff know each day who to contact.

## Parental Involvement

We regard the fostering and maintenance of good relations between home and school as of vital importance in education. To encourage such co-operation the following opportunities are provided for parents and carers to ensure they are aware of, and involved in, their child's learning:

### a) Curriculum overview

At the start of each term your child will bring home an overview of the particular aspects of the curriculum which will be covered over the following weeks. You will be able to see at a glance, for example, what your child will be doing in number or language work and will be able to support them accordingly.

### b) Supported learning at home

All pupils from P1 to P7 take reading books home and we encourage you to share these books with your child, recording any comments in the Reading Record booklet. Pupils, usually starting during P2, will also bring home spellings on a Monday to learn for the Friday. Pupils in Primary 1 learn letter sounds and patterns using Jolly Phonics and will bring home new sounds to share with you.

Throughout the year there may be other activities for pupils to do at home e.g. a quiz, researching on the internet, making a model, collecting artefacts, interviewing family members etc.

### c) Parent's evenings

Parents' Evenings are held twice yearly. An appointment is made to enable parents to have a private interview with the class teacher to look over their children's work and discuss progress.

### d) Appointments

Parents are encouraged to meet with the Head teacher or individual staff member to discuss any matter giving cause for concern. A note or telephone call to the Head teacher to arrange a mutually convenient time is all that is required.

#### e) Reports

There is an end of year report informing you of progress in all curriculum areas and detailing the level your child is working within.

#### f) Personal Learning Plans/E portfolios

We are transitioning from paper copies of work to online ones. These working folders contain information on work your child will be covering that term, targets for learning, samples of work, copies of evaluations and pupil reflections. Parents and carers are encouraged to respond and to contribute to these folders.

Nursery pupils develop their own Learning stories which are available in the foyer each day.

#### g) Parent Council

Parents are invited to approach their representatives on the Parent Council if you wish to raise any points.

#### h) School events

Many events take part through the school year to which families are warmly welcomed e.g. Open evenings, concerts, quizzes, garden parties, etc which are very well attended.

#### i) Parental views

Throughout the year parents and carers are asked to complete questionnaires or response sheets to help us set our priorities for the School Improvement plan. Additional questionnaires form part of the school self-evaluation process. Pupils and staff are also involved in this process. We continually strive to develop our school and value any suggestions and comments which would help us achieve this.

For further information and resources regarding getting involved with your child's learning, please contact the school and/or take a look at Parentzone on Education Scotland's website. The direct link is: [Home | Parent Zone](#)  
You may wish to learn more about the role of the Parent Council in representing your views on education matters. You can contact the school's Parent Council directly and/or access information on Education Scotland's website.



The direct link is: <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/getting-involved/parent-councils/>

## School Ethos

### School Aims

- We will give your child the best possible start by working in partnership with you.
- We will provide opportunities to help develop your child to be a confident individual, a responsible citizen, an effective contributor and a successful learner.
- We will work together to ensure that your child develops core skills in English language and mathematics within the context of Curriculum for Excellence.
- We will maintain a strong focus on your child's health and wellbeing.
- We will support creativity and critical thinking through all areas of the curriculum.
- We will recognise and encourage your child's wider achievements - both in and out of school.
- We will nurture an ethos of inclusion, safety, equal opportunities, fun, care and compassion working in partnership with each other and with the local and wider community.
- We will give your child opportunities to personalise elements of the curriculum to enable them to follow their own interests and meet their individual educational needs.

## Opportunities for pupils to personalise their own learning

Developing education through pupil's interests is at the heart of our teaching. It is important to us that pupils have a say in what they learn and how they learn it i.e. facilitators of their own learning. The children will follow one or more topics each term selected from ideas which have been suggested by the pupils e.g. this year, in August, they chose to study China. Within each topic pupils will have the opportunity to undertake personal projects on an aspect they find interesting.

At the start of a new topic pupils will consider what they already know, what they want to learn in the form of a set of questions, and by the end of the topic will endeavour to answer those questions. Pupils will consider how to research and how to display their work. The class teacher will draw up a curriculum plan

from pupil ideas, may add additional areas of learning, will ensure that all necessary information is covered and that all appropriate areas of the curriculum are addressed.

The nursery supports pupil interests on a daily/weekly basis. All of their activities are child led.

## Celebrating Achievements

Skeld Primary School recognises and celebrates all pupils achievements both within and out with school. We hold awards sessions during which certificates are presented e.g. Head Teacher's Awards. Pupils are encouraged to bring in awards they have received out with the school e.g. swimming, agricultural show, horse riding etc. and parents are encouraged to tell us of any other achievements. No personal achievement is too small to celebrate. Where the whole school achieves an award e.g. in the Music Festival, this is announced in the Shetland Times newspaper, the Westside News publication and on the school website.

## Behaviour

Skeld Primary School encourages positive and cooperative behaviour between all members of the school community. It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well.

We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all.

The pupils and staff discuss what **will** happen if they don't work hard or misbehave. The consensus was that if we are not happy with something they are doing then warning will be given and if this is ignored then parents will be informed.

## The School in the Community

Evidence suggests that the school is highly thought of in the local community. In the past the school was used by the pre - fives, other groups have used the school over the years and we would support others to do so.

Events which the school stages e.g. Christmas Shows, quizzes, Garden Parties etc. are very well attended and include members of the local community who do not have pupils at the school.

The school makes use of the local environment and local knowledge within delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence e.g. the fishing and crofting community, as well as community and family members. Pupils from the school take part in, and contribute to, local events such as the Skeld Flower Show, the Walls Agricultural show and the Hairst show.

The school also makes good use of the wider Shetland Community as a tool for learning, visiting places such as Scatness Iron Age Broch, the Croft House Museum, Kergord woodland, businesses such as the Shetland Dairies, Northlink, and events such as an Eco Play and Brae Up Helly Aa. Due to Covid these visits further afield are just beginning again.

The school has run several enterprise activities to raise money for items of pupil choice e.g. a day trip out, playtime games etc.

The school achieved Eco School status and was awarded its 4th Eco flag in 2012. The school raises funds for a number of organisations including Children in Need and the Blytheswood Shoebox appeal.

## **Curriculum – overview**

Curriculum for Excellence is designed to provide a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum throughout a child's life from 3 to 18 years old.

The curriculum aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work.

Curriculum for Excellence defines five levels of learning. The first four levels provide a broad general education, with progression to qualifications described under a fifth level, the senior phase.

Level	Stage
Early	The pre-school years and P1, or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
Third and Fourth	S1 to S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly equates to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4.  The fourth level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programmes will not include all of the fourth level outcomes.
Senior phase	S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

Teachers and practitioners will share information to plan a child's "learning journey" from 3-18, helping their progression from nursery to primary, primary to secondary and beyond. This will ensure children continue to work at a pace they can cope with and be provided with challenge they can thrive on.

Detailed information about Curriculum for Excellence can be found on Education Scotland's website. This includes:

- how the curriculum is organised
- the entitlements of every child
- how progress is assessed.

The direct link is: [What is Curriculum for Excellence? | Curriculum for Excellence | Policy drivers | Policy for Scottish education | Scottish education system | Education Scotland](#)

## Curriculum

A Curriculum for Excellence provides a structure and a programme of activities for all pupils in keeping with the aims of the school. The curriculum enables pupils to encounter a range of areas of learning through which they will meet Page 16 different kinds of knowledge and experience different ways of thinking.

The curriculum covers the following 8 areas for pupils aged 3-18 years:

Health and Well Being

Expressive Arts  
Languages  
Mathematics  
Religious and moral education  
Sciences  
Social Studies  
Technologies

Outdoor Education is something we believe in and get out into the world with our trusty Kelly kettle and hot chocolate whenever we can.



The curriculum is designed to enable pupils to become:

Effective Contributors  
Responsible Citizens  
Successful Learners  
Confident Individuals

Under Curriculum for Excellence, everyone involved in education has a responsibility to develop young people's literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing skills across all areas of their learning.

## **Assessment and Reporting**

We follow reporting guidance issues by the local authority.

The Scottish Government launched the Scottish National Standardised Assessments in numeracy and literacy during 2017/18. These assessments were

implemented in P1, P4 and P7 during 2021/22 and will continue to be carried out annually. These are designed to complement our existing assessment arrangements and will be used to assist in validating teacher professional judgements and to further inform next steps in individual pupil learning.

Further information on achievement, reporting and profiling can be found on Education Scotland's website.

The direct link is: [Assessment and achievement | Learning in Scotland | Parent Zone \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/parent-zone)

Parents are welcome to speak with us at any time throughout the year to discuss pupil progress and any issues as they arise.

## Transitions

Transitions occur at key points in a child's education when they move on to a different stage of learning. Transitions can include moving to the stage of primary education, moving from primary to secondary school, moving to the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence and then post-school learning, Page 20 training or work. Transitions can also include any changes in a pupil's learning journey, for example when a pupil changes school or when learning is interrupted.

### Pre nursery > nursery

The school used to host the Skeld under 5s group on a Thursday afternoons from 12.30 until 14.00 – But due to low numbers of pre school children in the community then this has been suspended. We are keen to start this again when we can. Parents and carers are encouraged to bring along babies and toddlers for a play session. This facility means children are familiar with the setting and staff even before entering the nursery. Prospective nursery pupils and their parents will be invited to attend a number of nursery sessions together in the weeks preceding their start date.

### Nursery > Primary 1

Pupils who attend the nursery are fully involved in school life meaning the transition process into P1 a smooth and seamless experience. There will be a number of dedicated 'move up' days during the summer term when nursery pupils will join their prospective class mates to work with the P1 -3.

#### P7 > Secondary 1

P7 pupils from Skeld Primary School generally move into the secondary department at Aith Junior High school. Pupils will take part in several planned events, e.g. sports events, library work, 2 whole days of transition, throughout their P7 year to enable them to meet their prospective peer group and the staff of Aith Junior High School. In 2021/23 we trialled extra visits during the swimming block in the summer term. This is to continue in 23/24.

The Head Teacher of Aith Junior High school is Michael Spence who can be contacted on 01595 807400.

National organisations, such as Parenting Across Scotland, provide advice to parents on supporting their child's transitions. The direct link to Parenting Across Scotland is: <http://www.parentingacrossscotland.org>

We recognise that children with additional support needs may need transition arrangements that are additional to those made for their peers. Information sharing and planning will take place in advance of each transition. Further details can be found on Shetland Islands Council's website.

The direct link is: [Additional Support Needs Information – Shetland Islands Council](#)

## Placing Requests

If you do not wish for your child to attend the catchment area school, you can place a request with Shetland Islands Council that your child attend another school.

Details of how to make a placing request can be found in Shetland Islands Council, Children's Services, Admissions Policy.

The policy can be found at: [School Enrolment – Shetland Islands Council](#)

Please make your Placing Request in writing to:

Director of Children's Services Children's Services, Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick ZE1 0QD

To help you, the Scottish Government has published a guide for parents on choosing a school and the placing request system. It is available on the Scottish Government's website. The direct link is:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/11/10093528/0>

In Shetland, we have two special Additional Support Needs departments (attached to Bells Brae School and Anderson High School). A request for a child to access a place in one of these special departments is at the discretion of Children's Services.

## Support for Pupils

Most pupils will be given the support they need to fully access the curriculum in the general course of their education. There will be times when some pupils will need additional support. This could be on a long-term basis with the amount of support varying according to the needs of the pupil as progress is made through school or as a temporary support when a need arises.

Information on how pupils' additional support needs are identified and addressed can be found on Shetland Islands Council's website. The website also provides information on mediation and dispute resolution services, links to the NHS and other agencies or organisations that can provide further support, information and advice about support and advocacy. The direct link is: [http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/asn\\_home.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/asn_home.asp)

If you feel your child may require additional support please contact the head Teacher on the school telephone number in the first instance.

Learning Support may be provided in the classroom by an Additional Support teacher or an Additional Support Auxiliary. Individual or small-group tuition may also be suitable for those who are experiencing difficulty in learning.



Parental consent is requested prior to pupils being withdrawn from the classroom.

Additional help may be provided by the Speech and Language Therapist and the Psychological Services Department. Other useful information and advice regarding additional support for learning can be found on Enquire's website. The direct link is: <http://www.enquire.org.uk/>

## Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

In Shetland, we believe that children can be better supported by adults working closely together and sharing important information with each other. This process is known as GIRFEC: getting it right for every child.

Before GIRFEC can be used, consent from the parent of the child and/or the child (depending on the age of the child) is required.

The staff asking for permission will explain more about what GIRFEC means. Detailed information about the process can be found on Shetland Islands Council's website. The direct link is:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_families/GIRFEC.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/children_and_families/GIRFEC.asp)

## Child Protection

It is every child's right to be cared for and protected from harm. It is every person's responsibility to make sure that happens. The Shetland Child Protection Committee provides help when there is a need. Their website gives information on how to access that help. The direct link is:

<http://www.childprotectionshetland.com>

Shetland Islands Council's website also provides information on our responsibilities towards children and includes where to find help and support. The direct link is:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_families/child\\_protection.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/children_and_families/child_protection.asp)

Mr Renwick, our Head Teacher, is responsible for Child Protection at Skeld Primary School.

## School Improvement

A copy of the improvement plan is available in school and on the website.

Information about the school's performance at national level can be found on the Scottish Government's website and on the Education Scotland's Scottish Schools Online website which also includes HMIE Inspection Reports.

The direct link is: [Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

## School Policies and Practical Information

Copies of all our school policies can be found on our school website. Policies applicable to all schools across Shetland can be found on Shetland Islands Council's website.

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/policies\\_guidelines\\_and\\_forms.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/policies_guidelines_and_forms.asp)

These include:

- healthy eating
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- school trips
- equality and diversity
- adverse weather.

We ask that a blanket permission form is completed at the beginning of the school year for trips in and around the local area. This is done on the understanding that we advise you, via the school newsletter or a leaflet, in advance of any trips, as well as activities and clubs as they become available throughout the school year. You will be asked for additional permissions as appropriate.

## Instrumental Instruction

From P5, the parents of all pupils have the opportunity to apply to the School's Service for their child to have instrumental tuition. Shetland Island Council's website provides information on Instrument Instruction along with other creative learning opportunities.

The direct link is:

[Instrumental Instruction – Shetland Islands Council](#)

## Pupil Leadership

As well as having a say in what topics they undertake, pupils within the school have the opportunity to take on leadership roles. Normally this would be undertaken by an elected pupil council. Due to the low numbers the children decided that they would rather all just take part in discussions that affect them.

## The School Meals Service

The Schools Meals Service is run and managed by Shetland Islands Council Catering Service. All queries regarding this service should be directed to the Catering and Cleaning Manager, 01595 744129.

The menu is displayed in various locations within the school and on the school website. Paper copies are also available from the Catering and Cleaning Manager.

All children eat their lunch in the school dining hall. On a daily basis pupils will be offered a hot meal as well as other options, e.g. soup and sandwiches.

The current charge for pupils in P6/7 is £2.30 per day.

Pupils in P1-5 receive free school meals. It is therefore assumed that all pupils in these classes will be having a school dinner unless their parent/carer has opted out.

Parents/carers of pupils in P6-7 must opt in for their child(ren) to have lunch and pay for lunches using the ParentPay online system.

Parents will be given more information and log in details at the time of enrolment. Opting in and out is on a termly basis.

Children may bring packed lunches if they wish.  
All packed lunches are eaten in the dining hall.

School milk is available to all children at a subsidised cost.  
Payment will be collected at the beginning of each term via ParentPay. The cost for the term ahead will be emailed to all parents.

Parents of children who are vegetarian or have other dietary requirements should inform the Head Teacher so that suitable arrangements can be made.

### *Financial Help for Parents*

Grants are available for school meals and clothing. Guidance and an application form can be found on Shetland Islands Council's website.

The direct link is:

[EMA, Bursaries and Financial Support – Shetland Islands Council](#)

Information on the provision and finance of transport can be found on Shetland Island Council's website.

The direct link is:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/hpc\\_school\\_transport.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/hpc_school_transport.asp)

## *The School Day*

The school day begins at 09.00am and ends at 3.15pm. The Playground is unsupervised until 08.50. Please do not leave children prior to this time.

We have supervised break-time from 10.45am until 11am.

Supervised lunchtimes are from 12.45pm till 1.30pm.

On a Friday we finish at 14.00 with lunch being 12.00 – 12.45

Our Nursery operates from 09.00 am – 14.00 pm

Term dates for the school year can be found on Shetland Islands Council's website. The direct link is:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/term\\_dates.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/term_dates.asp)

## **Additional Information**

### *Online Protection*

For information about online protection for your child, you may like to look at the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre's website.

The direct link is:

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

## *Snow Days*

*What you can do to help in the event of school closure/unexpected days off school:*

- Encourage your children to read –e.g. comics, novels, magazines, newspapers etc. Draw a character from their reading. Write a review of the book or article.
- Practice times tables and spelling
- Do a mini personal project together
- log into GLOW and find out if there is a task to complete, or discussion to add to. Use PowerPoint or Sway in Glow to present it. There is no problem if you want to go old school with paper, glue and felt pens.
- Bake/cook, using practical maths skills
- Get them to summarise a programme they have watched
- Draw a picture of the view from a window
- Go on Scratch or IXL