

# ORKNEY SECONDARY SECTOR



# SCHOOLS OF AMBITION

## TRANSFORMATIONAL PLAN

### 2007 - 2010

# ORKNEY SECONDARY SECTOR



## Schools of Ambition Transformational Plan 2007 - 2010 "ISLANDS APART GROWING TOGETHER"

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## Section 1

### Introduction

Orkney is Scotland's smallest local authority and one of its most remote communities. There is a vast resource of expertise in our twenty-three schools, but these are distributed over the Orkney mainland and twelve different islands. The Secondary provision comprises two six-year secondary schools (Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy), and four Junior High Schools. (North Walls, Westray (formerly Pierowall), Sanday, Stronsay). The total number of pupils in secondary education is approximately 1500, with school populations ranging from 10 – 900. While a full range of courses are offered at all levels in the six-year schools, there is a more limited range of opportunities for Junior High School pupils who currently must transfer to the Orkney mainland at the end of S4 if they wish to continue their secondary education.

Orkney, as a remote community, faces distinct challenges in recruitment of staff. This is particularly significant in the island schools where there are often few resident staff and little or no supply cover. Given the small size of the Junior High Schools the local authority provide a team of itinerant staff covering expressive arts and secondary subjects, a valued support when resident staff are often required to teach two or more secondary subjects. The itinerant staff are a very special group who fly or sail daily, in all weathers, in order to get to island schools to support as wide a curriculum as possible, many teaching in several of the Junior High Schools each week. Nevertheless, the challenges that the modern curriculum now presents, means that to provide parity of opportunity the local authority need to provide imaginative solutions to delivering and supporting these schools curriculum.

There is a very strong sense of identity within the county of Orkney. Whilst we will continue to celebrate the diversity of existing educational experiences, we also want to encourage the vision of education as a partnership involving all schools, pupils, staff, parents and the community. We firmly believe that all Orkney schools should be excellent, ambitious schools that can be compared with the best in the world and that we can make that significant difference for the benefit all Orkney youngsters.

One of the most important challenges in enabling us to work more collaboratively is the current inadequate level of e-infrastructure and most up-to-date technologies. This has stifled our ability to consider the infinite possibilities to improve learning and teaching in Orkney. That is until now. As connectivity continues to improve locally and nationally we are ready to build and develop e-infrastructure to deliver a wider, more relevant curriculum and professional development programme.

All schools value the celebration of success and are now considering how achievements can be acknowledged and recorded in a distinct Orkney-style.

In spite of being geographically remote, the international dimensions of global citizenship are already developing well in Orkney and will continue to be promoted through further e-twinning projects. We will build on the success of existing international links to enhance learning and continue to investigate innovative ways to integrate the curriculum.

## Vision

*"I am prepared to go anywhere provided it be forward" (David Livingstone)*

Education in Orkney is well-placed to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and our Schools of Ambition (SOA) project is an opportunity for us - a unique partnership of six schools - to step back, take stock and plot anew our journey into the future. We are committed to do this to enable all our young people to get the very best out of Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence. It is our collective vision to harness the resources available to us in a way that will transform the learning opportunities of all our secondary pupils.

Electronic connectivity and new technologies will enable schools to work in partnership as never before so that we can pool our expertise to remove barriers, open opportunity and drive improvement. Creative solutions will be sought to enable and improve e-learning opportunities for the whole learning community. Schools collaborating to provide the highest quality professional development opportunities for all their staff and personal development opportunities for all their pupils will lead to a step change, increasing our leadership capacity and enhancing our skills. In turn, this will attract a high quality of applicants to work in and strengthen our communities.

We will work together to create a community of learning in which pupils enjoy a rich and relevant curriculum available to all, regardless of geographical location.

Our commitment to recognising and celebrating both the achievements and the unlimited potential of every learner will be consolidated using technology. We will develop exciting new ways, which are clearly characteristic of Orkney, to record and value pupil accomplishments thereby building the confidence and self-worth that will maximise learning. Extending coalitions, partnerships and links between schools locally, nationally and internationally will make sure we learn with each other and from each other, and so transform outcomes for the better.

In summary, the additional strength and synergy of our six schools working collectively will give us the capacity to realise our ambitious, exciting visions for excellence. These will be driven forward under four key areas:

#### 1. Enhancing Skills

We will maximise the impact of learning and leadership opportunities through a coordinated drive for inclusive and effective professional development for all staff and personal development for all pupils enhanced by e-learning opportunities.

#### 2. Transforming the curriculum

We will ensure the parity of curricular opportunity as a right for all pupils in Orkney, enhanced by e-learning opportunities, and delivered to meet the needs of each school as appropriate.

#### 3. Celebrating Success

We will recognise and celebrate each individual's successes with innovative and distinctive e-recording of achievement.

#### 4. Connecting with others

We will establish ourselves as active participants in the global educational community as part of our shared quest for excellence.

Strong schools, growing ever stronger together, will play a central role in developing and sustaining the rich and varied communities of Orkney, making them robust enough to benefit from, rather than fall victim to, the ever-increasing rate of change around them.

## Key Areas and Impact

The impact of realising the vision of the Orkney schools will be:

### 1. Enhancing Skills

We will maximise the impact of learning and leadership opportunities through a coordinated drive for inclusive and effective professional development for all staff and personal development for all pupils enhanced by e-learning opportunities

Impact

- Ø Improved professional development opportunities available for all
- Ø Increased pupil and staff confidence in the skills required to use e-learning
- Ø Enhanced leadership capacity for all pupils and staff
- Ø Improved skills and motivation throughout our school communities

### 2. Transforming the curriculum

We will ensure the parity of curricular opportunity as a right for all pupils in Orkney, enhanced by e-learning opportunities, and delivered to meet the needs of each school as appropriate.

Impact

- Ø Improved access to a richer and extended curriculum irrespective of geographical location
- Ø Access to an appropriate range of vocational opportunities for all pupils

- Ø Effective collaborative learning between schools
- Ø Pupils engage with quality learning and teaching
- Ø Enhanced partnerships with Orkney College and business providers
- Ø Successful use of technology promotes exciting learning

### 3. Celebrating Success

We will recognise and celebrate each individual's successes with innovative and distinctive e-recording of achievement.

#### Impact

- Ø All pupils are involved in e-recording their achievements
- Ø All pupils are involved in their own personal learning planning
- Ø All pupils take more responsibility for their own learning
- Ø All pupils have higher aspirations
- Ø All pupils have improved motivation and participation in their learning
- Ø Enhanced parental involvement in their own learning

#### 4. Connecting with others

We will establish ourselves as active participants in the global educational community as part of our shared quest for excellence.

##### Impact

- Ø Effective partnerships develop between all Orkney schools & the wider global educational community
- Ø Participation in the global education community is embedded in every schools' curriculum
- Ø Each pupil's learning experience is enriched through their interaction with the global educational community
- Ø Each pupil's sense of global citizenship is enhanced

## Management of the Plan

The transformational plan will be managed in a number of ways:

At a strategic level through the 'Orkney Schools of Ambition Steering Group' with representation from each school's learning community and the local authority.

In the first instance this group will be supported by the SOA Coordinator who will regularly present reports on progress & the impact(s) the plan is having on our anticipated project outcomes. The Steering Group will monitor the success and in particular the over arching outcomes for the project as a whole. Where necessary they will discuss and modify current and planned actions to ensure the programme's impact is maximised in line with expectation.

The officers in this group will report to the Education Directorate on all aspects of the programme as it affects the current LEA Service Improvement Plan.

We will liaise with our SOA National Researcher and work in partnership with our SOA Senior Adviser.

At school level each Head Teacher, their SMT and / or their school based steering group will monitor the progress and impact of the SOA plans, specifically in terms of

1. Local Authority / county level as it affects the school
2. Actions that are progressed at school / community level.

The SOA Coordinator will play a key role in supporting each school in this process. The coordinator will be instrumental in collaborating with schools to help focus & facilitate the implementation of their plans and assessment progress.

The main driver for change is through the School Development Plan (SDP) process. The SOA transformational plan will influence and inform each SDP. The key areas and impact statements will be clearly articulated into the plans with local emphasis as appropriate.

At a Financial level the project management will be in line with the budgeting set out in both the main plan and individual school plans, will be undertaken by the SOA Coordinator with assistance from Head Teacher's and Education Department Officers. Standard Orkney Island Council accounting procedures will apply and appropriate cost centres and budget monitoring will be implemented.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

As the implementation of the transformational plan progresses, the natural Monitoring & Evaluation cycle will be carried out by the Education Department Link Officers in partnership with their schools and SOA Coordinator. This will provide consistent quality assurance standards to measure:

- the impact of SOA on & within each individual school
- the impact of the project as a whole
- the impact of the project on the Local Authority Service Improvement Plan targets.

### Capacity Building & Sustainability

The SOA project seeks, through effective capacity building and considerations of sustainability that the programme outcomes can be continued post SOA funding.

Key aspects to this are the:

- investment in training & support for staff & pupils in skills and importantly leadership
- development of a flexible sustainable curriculum model
- implantation of systems which can deliver the curricular model chosen within resources normally available
- ethos of parity of opportunity for all pupils in the secondary sector
- anticipation that celebrating success & achievement in the widest sense will contribute to sustainability because of higher expectations amongst pupils, parents & staff
- enhanced skills of everyone in our learning community to become confident, responsible citizens of the world.

successful learners...effective contributors...confident individuals...responsible citizens

# learning and teaching is...

## Enhancing Skills

- ✚ raising attainment
- ✚ pace and challenge
- ✚ meeting the needs of the most able
- ✚ the motivated classroom
- ✚ frameworks for intervention
- ✚ solution oriented approaches
- ✚ critical skills
- ✚ cpd
- ✚ coaching
- ✚ leadership
- ✚ induction

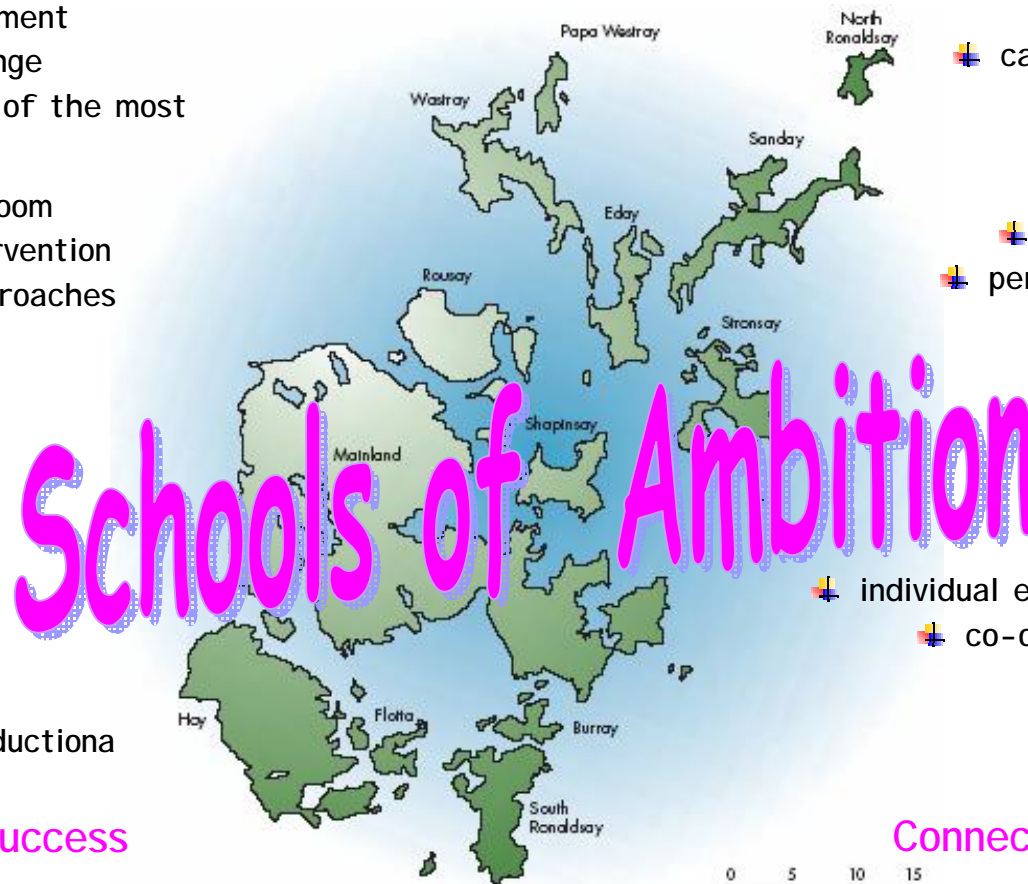
## Celebrating Success

## Transforming the Curriculum

- ✚ capacity building
- ✚ AifL
- ✚ formative assessment
- ✚ personal learning planning
- ✚ moderation

- ✚ individual educational programmes
- ✚ co-ordinated support plans
- ✚ wider achievement

## Connecting with Others



'education is for all' 'education is about the whole person' 'education is for life'  
'education is the shared responsibility of the whole community'

Orkney's Learning Communities: - Outward Looking, Forward Thinking



## Transformational Plan 2007 - 2010

### Year 2 : 2008 - 2009

- Revised CPD programme available to all staff
- E-learning opportunities increased
- Enhanced Leadership Programme available to all
- Investigate further developments through e-learning
- Research partnerships in the community to support Leadership Programme

### Year 3 : 2009 - 2010

- Extended CPD programme available to all staff including extensive e-learning opportunities and comprehensive Leadership Programme

## Transformational Plan 2007 - 2010

### 2. Transforming the curriculum

We will ensure the parity of curricular opportunity as a right for all pupils in Orkney, enhanced by e-learning opportunities, and delivered to meet the needs of each school as appropriate.

Year 1 : 2007-2008

Actions	Criteria for Success	Monitoring	Resources
Establish Curriculum Review Group (CRG)	CRG has representation from all key stakeholder groups and an agreed remit (includes pupils)	Agenda and minutes of meetings shared with Strategic Steering Group	Staff time
Each school construct a baseline of existing practice	Comprehensive baseline completed and agreed as accurate by Strategic Steering Group	Baseline data	Staff time
I investigate effective solutions for parity of provision in each school and through collaboration between schools	Proposals on curriculum model produced by Strategic Steering Group	SWOT Analysis of proposals	Staff time
I investigate timetabling solutions and review modes of curriculum delivery	Proposals on time-tabling solutions and curriculum delivery produced aligned to curriculum model	SWOT Analysis of proposals	Staff time? Curriculum consultant
Consult with all schools and stakeholders on proposals on parity of curricular opportunity	All identified stakeholder group in the community s in the community have engaged with consultation	Questionnaire and minutes of meetings	Staff time
Produce plans to extend the delivery of vocational courses across schools including the development of new partnerships with the wider community	Comprehensive plans produced to introduce a wider range of vocational courses, to a wider ranger range of participants by a wider range of providers	Baseline data  Comparative analysis using data from increased provision e.g. % increase of courses	Staff time
I identify scope and requirement of e-learning infrastructure to support parity of curricular opportunity	Well informed report on audit of e-learning infrastructure produced with costed proposals for next steps	Report shared with appropriate stakeholders for their agreement e.g. GLOW representatives, LTScotland etc	Staff time

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## Transformational Plan 2007 - 2010

### Year 2 : 2008-2009

- Pilot identified curriculum model proposals
- Quality assurance framework produced to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum delivery
- Improve e-learning infrastructure to support collaborative learning between schools
- Pilot increased e-learning opportunities
- Renewed programme of innovative and accessible vocational courses trialled

### Year 3 : 2009 - 2010

- Fully implement the enhanced curriculum model with effective support through the e-learning infrastructure
- Evaluate the impact of the curriculum model and propose refinements
- Needs driven programme of e-learning opportunities available to all
- Develop a sustainable model for the delivery of vocational programmes to all schools

## Transformational Plan 2007 - 2010

### 3. Celebrating Success

We will recognise and celebrate each individual's successes with innovative and distinctive e-recording of achievement

Year 1 : 2007-2008

Actions	Criteria for success	Monitoring	Resources
Establish a Celebrating Success working group	Working group established with key stakeholder representation (including pupils) and an agreed remit	Minutes to Strategic Steering Group	Staff costs
Celebrating Success Strategy produced – following wide engagement and involvement of stakeholders - identifying key principles in recognising and celebrating success	Comprehensive and collegiate Strategy agreed  Next steps agreed on implementing Strategy	Minutes from Pupil Council meetings	Staff costs
Research on options for e-recording of achievement	Options paper on e-recording with costed proposals Way ahead agreed	Data gathered on research	Specialist staff time
Design and launch logo for distinct Orkney brand of e-recording of achievement	Widespread involvement of design of logo  Agreed logo which is distinctive to Orkney	Quality of designs which represent all schools	Staff time  Resources

## Transformational Plan 2007 - 2010

### Year 2 : 2008-2009

- Celebrating Success Strategy implemented in all schools
- Orkney Calendar of Events for Celebrating Success established
- Pilot e-recording of achievement

### Year 3 : 2009-2010

- All Orkney pupils recognise and celebrate their success with e-records

## Transformational Plan 2007 - 2010

### 4. Connecting with others

We will establish ourselves as active participants in the global educational community as part of our shared quest for excellence.

Year 1 : 2007-2008

Actions	Criteria for success	Monitoring	Resources
Audit of current global partnerships at school level, including exchange programmes with staff and pupils	Comprehensive picture of collective position, strengths and gaps (or opportunities) highlighted	Feedback from school management team meetings	Staff time
Audit the pupil experience of global citizenship	Comprehensive overview of experience in each school and by year group  Way forward agreed	Questionnaires  Feedback from Pupil Councils	Staff time
Awareness raising exercise of existing opportunities to become involved in the global educational community	Raised awareness of opportunities by staff and pupils	Feedback from staff meetings  Feedback from Pupil Councils	Staff time
Produce a detailed phased programme of improvements through wide consultation of pupils, staff and parents	Connecting with Others phased programme of improvement agreed	Feedback from staff meetings  Feedback from Pupil Councils  Comments from Parent Forums	Staff time
Establish strong links with appropriate organisations who can open opportunities and strengthen existing position	Network of effective partnerships established	Menu of partnerships and their level of involvement	Staff time

## Transformational Plan 2007 - 2010

### Year 2 : 2008-2009

- All schools have global partnerships
- Pilot of global citizenship activities trialled in all schools
- Phased programme of exchanges for staff and pupils in place

### Year 3 : 2009- 2010

- Further opportunities for staff and pupils to promote and celebrate our shared successes at school and county level, on the global stage

Orkney Financial Overview 2007 - 2010

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
SoA Co-ordinator Admin, strategic planning	£50k £20k	£35k £20k	£20k £20k
1.Enhancing Skills	£20k	£20k	£10k
2.Transforming the Curriculum	£8k	£35k	£24k
3.Celebrating Success	£8k	£10k	£6k
4.Connecting with Others	£14k	£20k	£10k
<b>Total</b>	<b>£120k</b>	<b>£140k</b>	<b>£90k</b>

### Section 3 Individual School transformations and impact:

Kirkwall Grammar School is a six-year comprehensive school serving the town of Kirkwall, the East Mainland of Orkney and all of the north and south isles excluding the island of Graemsay. The school is an ancient one, first mentioned in a royal charter in 1486 but probably considerably older.

The present building was opened in 1972. An imaginative and extensive addition was added in 1995. This has enhanced accommodation for Pastoral Care work in the school as well as providing social areas for pupils, an expanded Library, computer rooms and new administrative offices. More recently, further upgrading of the building has taken place to provide conference rooms, a fully refurbished dining and social area, a fitness suite and extensive Curriculum Support facilities. The possibility of a completely new school building is currently being considered by OIC and SEED.

The school population reflects the increasing diversity of local society, economy and industry. Agriculture and fishing have been traditional industries for many years, but these have been supplemented by a growth in tourism and the oil terminal at Flotta.

The school enjoys good relations with local businesses and industry with many senior pupils taking advantage of the opportunity to take part in work experience programmes. The school has successfully competed in the Young Enterprise Scotland competition and for the past four years has organised a Citizenship Week in which all pupils have an opportunity to participate. We currently have exchange links with schools in Germany, Norway, Italy and Canada and e-twinning links are being established with other schools in Europe and beyond.

In Kirkwall Grammar School we are very proud of the wide range of extra-curricular activities which are organised for pupils. These include supported study and homework clubs as well as sporting activities such as rugby, volleyball, sailing, canoeing, climbing, badminton and octopush in which we are the number one school in the UK. The book club and debating continue to be very successful while the carol service in St Magnus Cathedral is always a highlight of the school year. Traditional music, wind band, swing band and school orchestra are among the activities offered by the Music Department

and this year's outstanding Drama productions of 'Gaan tae the Nor Waast' and "Sleeping Beauty' were a great credit to the staff involved and the pupils who took part.

The opportunities presented by our participation in the Schools of Ambition programme are both exciting and challenging. We look forward to a future in which we can experience the synergy which will arise from working towards shared aims with our partner schools. Developing closer links between the schools will enable all of our pupils to have access to a broader range of curricular opportunities as well as allowing us to maximise the considerable resource that we are fortunate to have within the staff.

By 2010 we wish to see our pupils

- Improve their attainment in national examinations
- Have positive self image at the end of their secondary education
- Be actively involved in at least one activity in the local/national/international community
- Have enhanced curricular opportunities

By 2010 we wish to see all of our staff

- Complete CT/SQH and other professional qualifications
- Give positive feedback from CPD activities
- Consistently building the principles of AiFL and ACfE into their day to day teaching
- Participate in a learning community at local or national level

By 2010 we wish to see our school

- Working in partnership with local businesses, the voluntary sector and other agencies e.g. SNH, Historic Scotland
- Have a high and positive profile within the local community
- Have more varied and closer ties with other schools in UK and abroad

To achieve this we need to build leadership capacity at all levels in both staff and pupils. The potential is there, the Schools of Ambition initiative will enable us to unlock it.

North Walls Community School is centrally situated on Hoy, the most southerly of the inhabited Orkney isles. Translated as the “Dark Isle” Hoy is renowned for its high heather hills; steep sea cliffs; sandy beaches and lush agricultural pasture. The island is accessible by car ferry service from Houton & foot ferry from Stromness and has good local services. Our present building was opened in 1984 and has fine views over Longhope Bay.

With an age spread of 3 to 83 our learners are already successful, confident and valued contributors. High expectations, care and support for others rests at the heart of our ethos, consequently our school has become a well respected focal point for the island's extended learning community. Each individual responsibly exercises their right to learn and teach in a welcoming, fun, safe environment. Positive relationships, creativity and independence are encouraged through interaction & involvement. Everyone is empowered to achieve their very best within an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Strategic leadership is now an acknowledged strength for the school. There is a clear vision to promote growth across all aspects of the school in spite of an uncertain & fluctuating roll. Currently there are 35 pupils from Nursery / Pre-school to the end of Secondary 2. Pupils then transfer to Kirkwall Grammar School, usually in June of the year they complete S2. We have strong links with Mitawa School in Malawi and an established e- learning exchange Ecole Max Trouche in France. In 2007 the school was accredited by the local authority as one of the counties top ‘Health Promoting Schools’.

We intend that participation with the ‘Schools of Ambition’ project will further focus our opportunities to enhance opportunities for every learner to be:

- ✓ Able to act with confidence & integrity in the international community
- ✓ Able to expand their knowledge & use their understanding wisely as enterprising citizens
- ✓ Empowered & skilled in making positive choices to achieve the best for themselves and others, including having equitable access to vocational learning at an early stage of their education

Continued...

By 2010 we will see North Walls as a:

- ✚ A leading community school highly valued by those it serves
- ✚ An outstanding health promoting school, recognized through local accreditation
- ✚ A school whose innovation in delivering an integrated & appropriate “curriculum for excellence for all” is fully appreciated as thinking outside the box
- ✚ An effective contributor in cross sector partnerships – regularly working with other schools, voluntary sector, health service, business and Orkney College

With many new staff to joining our team in August 2007 opportunities arising through Schools of Ambition will significantly help with induction. Enhanced CPD will continue to boost morale & motivation which in turn will feed learning & teaching. Improved ICT facilities will extend our world, bringing the outside in, opening minds and widening horizons. Electronic records of achievement will promote reflection, self evaluation & planning, focused skills that will enable all learners to embark confidently on their personal voyages of discovery.

*'Vision without action is only a dream. Action without vision is just passing time. Vision with action can change the world'*  
*Nelson Mandela*

## Sanday

Situated at the very heart of the beautiful island of Sanday, our community school is a Junior High School for pupils from 3 to 16 years. It is also a Community Centre with facilities used by pupils and all Sanday residents. Our classroom windows overlook some of the most beautiful views in Scotland

The community spirit of the school is one of our strengths, with a wide variety of activities and support available from within the community. The ethos of the school encourages hard work and a caring attitude to one-another, this has enabled pupils to achieve some excellent examination results, and continues to encourage each individual to develop as a responsible citizen. Our age range gives older pupils the opportunity to take responsibility for the care of younger pupils and creates a supportive family feeling for new pupils. Small classes enable every child to set and reach personal targets. We have a strong emphasis on creativity, exemplified particularly by a recent project to make an animated film and a planned project with the Royal School of Art, Music and Drama to roll out instrumental tuition to all pupils.

Throughout the year we offer a very wide range of extra-curricular activities. We are proud of our many achievements including winning an award for the use of technology in the early years, becoming the winners of the Scottish Schools Africa Challenge. and the development of a school plantation, planned and organised by pupils. We have a strong and developing link with a partner school in Malawi that has attracted national interest and included reciprocal visits by staff and pupils.

Our relative remoteness (we are a ninety-minute ferry journey away from mainland Orkney) and our small size present us with some challenges. We work hard to provide pupils with the same curricular opportunities as those in larger schools enjoy, but this is not always possible. We feel this particularly keenly in the area of vocational learning. Accommodation constraints can make it difficult for our pupils to progress post-sixteen to opportunities other than Kirkwall Grammar School when some would benefit more from a college placement or apprenticeship. We do not have immediate access in a crisis to support services such as social workers or psychologists and so it is important for us to build our capacity to support pupils from within our own resources. It can be expensive and time-consuming for staff to participate in professional development opportunities off-island.

Becoming a school of ambition with our partner schools in Orkney will enable us to address these challenges. Increased connectivity (electronically and collaboratively) will allow us to offer a wider, more flexible, more personalized curriculum to our pupils. A collaborative approach to professional development, centred on a model of inter-school learning communities exploiting e-links, will enhance our professional skills. We can make a big contribution to working with others to develop international links through our growing experiences with Minga school in Malawi. Most powerfully of all, we will be able to maximize the considerable benefits we already enjoy as a result of our small pupil numbers to systemically recognize and celebrate pupil achievements, supporting each individual to set goals and targets for the next stages of their learning. We will achieve all this sooner, more effectively and more creatively by working together with our partner schools than we ever will alone.

Stromness Academy is situated on the east side of Stromness looking across the harbour of this town with its cultural strengths, sea-faring and exploring background and its strong sense of identity. Pupils come mainly from five West Mainland Primary Schools: Dounby, Evie, Firth, Stenness and Stromness, most of them by bus.

The building is warm and vibrant inside, with everyone enjoying attractive and well-cared-for facilities at school. They are also key venues for local weddings, concerts and other regular events, with these community facilities widely used. During the next two years additional building to enhance Music, PE and Guidance facilities will emerge.

A strength of the school is commitment to high achievement and success. This is about success in broader areas than academic. Underpinning that is the sense of community within the school, with strong development of our Pupil Council and mentoring systems. The time is ripe for increased opportunities for senior pupils to contribute to the ethos of the school. Citizenship through Eco-school developments; through innovative fund-raising; through creative use of Library facilities; through an all-age weekly Activities Programme; through caring and support for our more vulnerable young people; and through whole school entertainment and cultural activities give us starting points for success. Arrangements for support of Probationers and new teachers are robust. Continuing Professional Development is recognised as an important mind-opening support for staff. The variety of opportunities of SOA will give us the chance to offer exciting and useful personal and professional development for young people and adults. We have already proved that we can “grow our own” ideas to exchange and develop with others, in aspects of Behaviour Management, Assessment for Learning and Young Enterprise, for example.

With skilled staff in compact departments, challenges for the curriculum include ensuring the breadth of choice which our young people deserve. Enhancements already include courses in Nautical and alternative curriculum provision involving Orkney College. There is potential for more cross curricular and imaginative use of distance learning both within the school. In addition, collaborative learning with other schools and through electronic portals will enhance our overall provision. Ensuring inclusive practice in the drive towards a Curriculum for Excellence will be given a boost by collaboration with parents, professionals and other partners in the community. Here, too, is the obvious chance to involve pupils, whose personal readiness to engage with modern technology outstrips our own. The extended use of e-learning will improve our links to schools in Orkney and beyond.

Some successes come to individuals, who share their news within our community. However, it is recognised that good communication of success needs constant reinvention. Everyone in Stromness Academy has interest in the successes of our young people, its staff and those in the community. Some successes are created by the community of the school, where cooperation and partnership create new springboards. To this end, innovative opportunities will be offered. A dynamic culture of achievement will be enhanced by traditional and electronic presentations of these achievements and celebrations.

Beyond our shores, people from the West Mainland have always travelled and explored. In these modern times, links to other countries, cultures and experiences are established through school trips and visits. Overcoming travel costs through electronic means, to create a global network is keenly anticipated. In Modern Languages and Geography there is already good groundwork for the extension of global links.

Schools of Ambition will enhance our connections across the six partnership schools, giving flexible opportunities to link at all levels; pupil to pupil, department to department, community to community. This is the best framework for extending these links to other areas of Scotland, Europe and beyond.

This is the compelling reason behind our involvement in Orkney's Schools of Ambition.

Stronsay School is small in comparative terms but big in ideas, systemic adaptability, and enthusiasm. How could it not be so, given the progress we have made in ensuring our pupils have experienced the curricular and extra curricular opportunities in the recent past?

Our school is also realistic and pragmatic. Times change. School rolls change. S1-S3/4 curriculum changes. There are increasing demands on our small number of resident staff given the number of national reports and initiatives. Itinerant staff hours have to be used where they are most needed within the school day: in the classroom. With itinerant staff flying in and out during the course of the week opportunities for professional development for all our school staff have to be balanced against the requisite number of class contact hours.

Schools of Ambition is presenting our school and other partner schools the opportunity to become greater than our individual parts and the opportunity to serve and sustain our unique environment in a unique way. Pooling our resources will create opportunities for collegiate working and a more equitable distribution of development tasks to ensure our schools and curriculum are fit for purpose in our 21<sup>st</sup> century. In so doing we will provide our young people with the appropriate educational experiences necessary for them to grow and develop in a century which will bring increasingly faster change.

Our school views our involvement in this collaborative venture as the way forward to enhance our pupils' educational experience and our staff's professional expertise, to support our local community and to secure our school's longer-term sustainability within fiscal and educational circumstances.

Our involvement will ensure that both resident and itinerant staff will have access to quality professional development, which will be enhanced through the focus provided by the Schools of Ambition vision. All staff will benefit personally and professionally from collegiate opportunities which will be available.

The quality of professional development will support the learning experiences of our pupils within the Schools of Ambition context.

We look forward to pupils having an enhanced choice of NQ subjects and having equitable access to vocational courses within the Orkney Schools of Ambition context.

Our schools working together will give individual schools' pupils more opportunities to discuss their hopes and ambitions with other young people across Orkney. Our pupils in Stronsay will become more motivated and independent learners as they become more analytical about their relevant school experiences.

Stronsay pupils have enjoyed contacts with pupils in other countries through their Comenius project involvement and will now have yet more opportunities to collaborate with young people abroad. This will further enhance the global perspective on their and others' lives. In fact both staff and pupils will have enhanced learning and teaching experiences as the school widens its educational horizon through future international education links.

Schools of Ambition will transform the educational landscape of our school community in its widest sense.

A vision of how we at Westray Junior High see the school developing as part of the Schools of Ambition Project.

Aims of the Schools of Ambition project in Westray:

- We will enrich the curriculum by broadening the opportunities for pupils and staff by:
  - working on joint curricular projects across the island schools
  - offering more subjects (certificated and vocational)
  - developing further extra curricular activities with other island schools for example residential trips, sporting activities
  - working with fellow colleagues in other island schools on joint planning as curriculum demands change.
  - Organising regular opportunities for isles staff to meet and share ideas and practice
  
- We will work with the other schools and community to develop a meaningful, ICT based, pupil achievement system. This will allow pupils to continue to use this record as they move through their education. This system should develop to be a model of best practice for the Scottish Executive and be recognised across Scotland.
  
- We will develop meaningful links with schools outwith Orkney to enhance pupils' interest and learning.
  
- We will enhance the experience and skills of our teachers through effective and focused CPD to
  - To improve the quality of teaching and learning
  - Embed the principles of Assessment is for Learning in all we do
  - Develop a whole school approach in line with the Curriculum for Excellence initiative

As a school we see the School of Ambition project as a mechanism to develop stronger sustainable links between isolated island schools, which will allow us to continue to develop and improve the education we provide to the whole community and through this ensure the viability of the isles.