

Item: 7

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 6 September 2023.

Education Scotland – Inspection of Papdale Primary School.

Report by Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Purpose of Report

To advise of the findings of the recent Education Scotland inspection of Papdale Primary School undertaken in May 2023.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That, in May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Papdale Primary School, being the first full inspection of any school in Orkney since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2.

That, during a full model inspection, four key quality indicators from How Good is Our School are used in a standard inspection, with the evaluations of these quality indicators for Papdale Primary School as follows:

- Leadership of Change – satisfactory.
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment – good.
- Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion – satisfactory.
- Raising Attainment and Achievement – good.

2.3.

That, as a result of the positive inspection visit, HM Inspectors are confident in the school's capacity to continue to improve and as such they will make no more visits to the school in connection with this inspection.

The Committee is invited to scrutinise:

2.4.

The inspection letter in respect of Papdale Primary School, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, issued by Education Scotland on 27 June 2023, together with next steps outlined in section 5 of this report, in order to obtain assurance.

3. Background

3.1.

In May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Papdale Primary School. This is the first full inspection of any of the schools in Orkney since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2.

The newly appointed head teacher had been in post for four weeks prior to the inspection week.

3.3.

2022/23 was the first full session of learning that had not experienced significant disruption during the last three years. Nationally learning was disrupted from March 2020 to June 2021 with two full lockdowns and restrictions placed on what could be done within schools to minimise mixing. During session 2021/22, there were many challenges with a high degree of absences from children and staff as the COVID-19 outbreak really impacted across Orkney's schools during this time and there were times when some classes had to close, including those at Papdale Primary School.

4. Summary of Inspection

4.1.

The following key strengths were identified:

- Children are polite, respectful and very proud of their school. They take part in learning activities with enthusiasm and are eager to contribute their ideas to improve their school.
- Children benefit from positive and mutually respectful relationships with staff. This underpins the supportive climate for learning where children feel valued, known as individuals, and nurtured.
- Staff use effective approaches to improve children's literacy skills. These are improving attainment in literacy outcomes for children.

4.2.

The following areas for improvement were identified:

- Senior leaders should continue to develop their approaches to evaluating and improving the work of the school. They should involve all members of the school community more regularly in improving the work of the school.
- Teachers should continue to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. This will help to ensure that children experience high-quality learning and teaching across the school.
- Staff should develop a shared language of wellbeing to support children more consistently to discuss and improve their wellbeing.

- Staff should develop children’s understanding of the importance of equality, valuing diversity and difference in society, and challenging discrimination. This will help children develop respect and understanding for others.

5. Summary and Next Steps

5.1.

The areas for improvement, outlined in section 4.2 above, will be taken forward by the school as part of the school improvement planning process and will feature on the plan for Papdale over the next few years to ensure that they are embedded in practice.

5.2.

Local Authority officers will continue to engage with the staff team to monitor and support the improvements identified.

6. Corporate Governance

This report relates to the Council complying with governance and scrutiny and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

7. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations to this report.

8. Legal Aspects

There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report

9. Contact Officers

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10. Appendix

Appendix 1 – Letter from Education Scotland.

27 June 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Papdale Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Children are polite, respectful and very proud of their school. They take part in learning activities with enthusiasm and are eager to contribute their ideas to improve their school.
- Children benefit from positive and mutually respectful relationships with staff. This underpins the supportive climate for learning where children feel valued, known as individuals, and nurtured.
- Staff use effective approaches to improve children's literacy skills. These are improving attainment in literacy outcomes for children.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Orkney Islands Council.

- Senior leaders should continue to develop their approaches to evaluating and improving the work of the school. They should involve all members of the school community more regularly in improving the work of the school.
- Teachers should continue to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. This will help to ensure that children experience high-quality learning and teaching across the school.
- Staff should develop a shared language of wellbeing to support children more consistently to discuss and improve their wellbeing.
- Staff should develop children's understanding of the importance of equality, valuing diversity and difference in society, and challenging discrimination. This will help children develop respect and understanding for others.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Papdale Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:
[Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Orkney Islands Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Graham Parry
 HM Inspector