

Item: 6

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 5 February 2020.

Education Scotland:

Inspection of Eday Community School and Nursery Class.

Report by Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Purpose of Report

To advise of the findings of Education Scotland's inspection of Eday Primary School and Nursery Class undertaken in September 2019.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That Eday Primary School and Nursery Class was inspected by Education Scotland in September 2019.

2.2.

That Education Scotland's evaluation for Eday Primary School focussed on the following four areas:

- Leadership of change.
- Learning, teaching and assessment.
- Raising attainment and assessment.
- Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

2.3.

That, of the four areas inspected for the primary stage, one received a satisfactory grading and three received a weak grading.

2.4.

That Education Scotland's evaluation for Eday Primary School's Nursery Class focussed on the following four areas:

- Leadership of change.
- Learning, teaching and assessments.
- Securing children's progress.
- Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

2.5.

That, of the four areas inspected, for the Nursery Class, all four received a satisfactory grading.

2.6.

That four areas of improvement were identified by Education Scotland as outlined in section 4.6 of this report.

It is recommended:

2.7.

That the Committee scrutinise the letter to parents and summarised inspection findings, attached as Appendices 1 to 3 respectively to this report, in order to obtain assurance that action has been taken or agreed as necessary.

3. Background

3.1.

In September 2019, Inspectors from Education Scotland (HMIE) visited Eday Primary School and Nursery Class as part of the national sample of school inspections.

3.2.

The findings of the inspection were published on 10 December 2019 in the form of a summary of inspection findings report and a letter to parents and carers, attached as Appendices 1 to 3 respectively to this report.

3.3.

During the visit, inspectors talked to parents/carers and children as well as working closely with the head teacher and staff.

3.4.

The inspectors gathered evidence to evaluate the quality of leadership and management within the school. They also gathered evidence to evaluate the learning provision and children's successes and achievements.

4. Summary of Inspection

4.1.

The inspection team found that Eday School was welcoming and inclusive to all children and families. They noted that the school and nursery provide a learning environment where staff know each child and family well and were responsive to their needs.

4.2.

The inspection team noted that in the nursery:

- Warm, trusting, close relationships are evident between the team and families.
- Parents know their views are important.
- The curriculum is flexible and responsive to children's individual interests and life events.

4.3.

The inspection team also commented on the fact that the school has had a number of headteachers for short periods over a prolonged period of time. Consequently, they recommended that the new headteacher needs to take structured and planned action to improve the school. In doing so, it was acknowledged that the headteacher had devised an appropriate three-year improvement plan and vision for improvement.

4.4.

While significant improvement is required, the inspection noted some important foundations for change. For example, the inspection team found that the headteacher was creating a learning environment where children feel safe and want to take increased responsibilities. At Eday, children are developing skills to learn together and support one another.

4.5.

Inspectors summarised the school's strengths as follows:

- The new headteacher's appropriate focus on improvement and involvement of parents and partners in the development of the school.
- Positive relationships fostered between the head teacher, staff, parents and children. Children are well supported in moving from nursery into P1 and onward to other schools.
- Polite children who are developing skills of independence and positive attitudes to their learning.

4.6.

The following areas for improvement were identified:

- Raise attainment and improve children's progress in learning.
- Ensure effective professional learning and development results in improved quality of learning and teaching.
- Develop rigorous self-evaluation based on robust evidence leading to improved outcomes for children.
- Continue to improve the learning environment and curriculum.

4.7.

The inspection team concluded that the school needed additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. Education Scotland will liaise with the Council regarding the school's capacity to improve and will return to carry out a joint support visit with the Council within six months of the publication of the letter to parents. Following this second visit, the inspection team will once again write to parents/carers informing them of the progress the school has made.

5. Corporate Governance

This report relates to governance and procedural issues 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.

6. Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications arising from this noting report.

7. Legal Aspects

The Council should comply with all legal recommendations made and subject to that, there are no legal implications arising from this noting report.

8. Contact Officers

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9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Inspection Report – School.

Appendix 2: Inspection Report – Nursery Class.

Appendix 3: Letter to Parents/Carers.

Summarised inspection findings

Eday Primary School and Nursery Class

Orkney Islands Council

10 December 2019

Key contextual information

Eday Primary School is located on the small island of Eday in Orkney. It has a small nursery class within the school and a multi-stage composite class for primary aged children. The school roll is eight children. The school has close links with Sanday Community School and supports a pilot arrangement for secondary aged children on shared placements between the two schools.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The recently appointed headteacher has been in post for six months. He teaches the multi-stage composite class of primary aged children and part-time shared placements for any secondary aged children living on Eday. He is supported well in the nursery setting by a lead early learning and childcare practitioner. The headteacher is proud to be associated with the island and aims to provide continuity to the school. His appointment to the post of headteacher is having a positive impact on children's experiences. The school has had a number of headteachers for short periods over a prolonged period of time. As a result, the new headteacher now needs to take structured and planned action to improve the school's weaknesses.
- The headteacher has devised an appropriate three year improvement plan and vision for improvement. It is important that this is shared with parents and partners to define what the school community wants to achieve overall for children.
- The headteacher is building links with the local community and parents successfully. Further involvement will help ensure they are clear about the school's improvement priorities. He correctly plans to involve them in revising the school's vision, values and aims and to include these in the recently completed school improvement plan. The school does not yet have robust approaches to self-evaluation. The headteacher has identified this as an important priority to improve outcomes for children and the overall quality of the school's work. The headteacher should develop systematic approaches to monitor how well children are progressing in their learning as high priority.
- The headteacher is committed to developing his professional skills and knowledge of current good practice in primary schools. He works closely with the education authority's Service Improvement Officer, who has provided continuity for the school during recent years, with regular changes in staffing. The education authority should ensure professional learning and collaboration with other schools is supported well and achieved. There are promising signs that collaborative working with other experienced teachers will offer appropriate mentoring and valued professional development. The headteacher is open to career-long professional learning and opportunities to develop his leadership skills.

- There are important weaknesses in the school's systems and approaches to assessment, tracking of children's progress and monitoring attainment over time. The school, supported by the local authority, should take forward the aspects for improvement outlined in this summary of inspection findings. The school needs more time to evidence the positive impact leadership of change is having on outcomes for children.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The headteacher and staff are taking promising steps to provide children with interesting learning opportunities that encourage them to be actively involved in their learning. Staff work alongside one another to provide support for children in their learning. This allows children to learn in small groups and individually. Teaching approaches are showing early signs of children becoming more skilled as independent learners.
- Most children are developing skills in the use of digital technologies to support their learning. There is scope to introduce children to a widening range of learning through digital technologies and for teaching to be enhanced through its increased use. Children are beginning to identify key aspects of their learning that they share with parents through digital software. This should be evaluated and developed further to motivate children and to help assess their progress.
- The headteacher is creating a learning environment where children feel safe and want to take increased responsibilities. Children are developing skills to learn together and support one another. There is scope for them to develop skills of cooperation and to listen to one another more carefully when completing group tasks. Individualised learning programmes will help engage children in more challenging activities matched well to their learning needs.
- The school has a variety of formats for teaching plans which are updated regularly. The plans make some links to resources and programmes for individual children and describe the learning to be covered. There is scope for the headteacher to streamline planning, to make progression in skills clear, and avoid systems becoming unnecessarily bureaucratic.
- The school is at an early stage of gathering and using assessment information. It is important to develop a framework of assessment to make improved links with children's next steps in learning. The school should consider how to make planning more directly linked to children's needs, progress and achievements. Individualised programmes based on children's prior learning, with clearly defined targets will make learning more meaningful for children. This approach will also help with monitoring and tracking to ensure all children make appropriate progress in their learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The school is developing its curriculum to ensure children are more active in their learning. The headteacher should take forward his plans to refresh the school's vision, values and aims and ensure a common understanding of what the school wants to achieve through its curriculum and unique context.
- The school is at an early phase of streamlining planning. Staff should refresh the seven year overview for interdisciplinary learning on an ongoing basis, to ensure it continually takes full account of children's interests. This will help ensure children build progressively on their skills and knowledge through a cohesive curriculum. The design principles are evident through children's enjoyment and the relevance of their learning. However, there is headroom to improve personalisation and choice and increase challenge in learning. Children need to develop skills in applying their learning across the curriculum. The school should continue to build on the four contexts and capacities for learning through defining the curriculum rationale.
- Interdisciplinary learning should enable children to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to new contexts.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The headteacher is developing positive relationships with parents and the community. He is introducing ways for children to share their learning with parents. Parents appreciate the opportunity to use an online application where the school shares photographs and examples of children's work. Whilst this is at the early stage of development, parents recognise its potential to help them be involved more in their children's learning.
- Parents value the headteacher's welcoming leadership style and open door policy. They talk positively of the headteacher's listening approach, as he develops an understanding of families and the local community in the island's context. As a result, parents are confident that the headteacher is beginning to respond to children's individual styles of learning.
- Commendably, parents share their skills with children through an afterschool club. The school is keen to support parents further so that they can offer their skills and knowledge as the school moves forward with its improvement agenda.
- Parents appreciate the support the headteacher provides for shared placements. The education authority plans to support shared placements at the school through virtual learning and e-learning opportunities. With the support of the education authority, the headteacher should regularly review the effectiveness of shared placements in meeting the needs of children and young people.
- The headteacher is aware of the need to be creative when engaging families to ensure everyone is enabled to contribute to decisions. The school's improvement plan identifies ways in which the headteacher plans to engage parents in evaluating the work of the school. As the school moves these plans forward, it will be important to ensure that parents feel their views are taken into account when planning the curriculum. The school is committed to improving opportunities for parents to support learning across the primary stages. The conveniently located community room could provide the school with a place to develop family learning activities. As he moves forward with his plans, the headteacher recognises the need to demonstrate the impact of engagement with parents, through improved outcomes for learners.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

weak

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The school is welcoming and inclusive to all children and their families.
- The school has very recently introduced the wellbeing indicators to develop children's understanding of wellbeing and what these mean for them. This is at a very early stage and children are not yet articulating their understanding well-enough. They know how to keep safe while at school and when using the internet. They have a growing understanding of the importance of fitness and healthy eating. The school should take forward its plans to develop nurturing approaches and the health and wellbeing curriculum.
- The headteacher is aware of the need to be well-informed through attendance at professional training in relation to safeguarding. He is aware of the education authority's guidance and child protection protocols. The education authority must ensure that the headteacher is fully supported to attend training that relates to his role and statutory responsibilities. This will enable the headteacher to take appropriate actions with confidence when necessary.
- The headteacher has identified the need to develop a nurturing approach to learning. He plans to take forward aspects of nurture to build children's resilience and confidence. In doing so, the school should consider how it strengthens its approach to supporting children to understand their emotions and the impact that this can have on others. By strengthening newly established informal daily check-ins and check-outs, children will be supported to manage transitions between activities and into and out of class.
- The school is beginning to identify those children who require additional support in their learning. The headteacher should develop strategies to support individual children in their learning. He should take forward the development of personal learning plans. This will help support all children to be more aware of personal short-term learning targets and the progress they are making. The headteacher should evaluate learners' progress towards their personal learning plan targets at key milestones. It would be helpful for the headteacher, with the support of the education authority, to have opportunities to build his confidence in understanding National Benchmarks and expected standards through moderation opportunities with other schools.
- As planned, staff should continue to develop children's understanding of equality and diversity to ensure this is fully reflective of 21st century Scotland, as well as the context of the school. The multi-stage composite class leads to children learning together and learning from one another. The school's curriculum has appropriate focus on learning about other world religions and beliefs. The headteacher encourages children to be tolerant and understanding of one another's needs. It would be helpful to develop children's responsibilities and rights through rights respecting school approaches. This will help empower them in decision making and developing their empathy further.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

- Overall, levels of attainment in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics are weak. Most children at first and second levels are not making sufficient progress or achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence levels. Curriculum pathways, planning for learning and approaches to assessment need to ensure children do not have gaps in their learning.
- The headteacher is beginning to analyse data from standardised tests to identify gaps in children's learning and skills. He plans to provide appropriately resourced interventions to address children's needs and improve their learning outcomes. It is too early to fully evaluate the impact of such approaches. The headteacher should ensure that he identifies and gathers the necessary information which will allow him to evaluate their success effectively. In moving forward, the school should use the National Benchmarks, supported by a range assessments, to assess progress and help in identifying children requiring additional support.

Listening and talking

- Overall, attainment in listening and talking is satisfactory. By the end of second level, children are achieving appropriate skills in talking. At the early level, children give brief responses when asked questions and need to develop confidence to articulate ideas more fully. At first and second levels, most children talk about their interests and know what they want to learn about. Across the school, most children do not listen to one another sufficiently well and are not skilled enough in taking turns. The school recognises the need to develop children's skills in listening and talking.

Reading

- Overall, attainment in reading is weak. At the early level, children recognise a growing range of initial sounds. They are beginning to apply their phonological awareness to attempt new words. At first level, most children are not progressing well enough in their reading skills. By the end of second level, children are encouraged to lead reading with younger children. However, there is much headroom to improve children's reading skills overall. Across the school, children now need to be reading a wide variety of texts that are well-matched to their skills and progress.

Writing

- Overall, attainment in writing is weak. The teaching of writing requires an increased focus to ensure improvement across all levels. Children are beginning to see the need to improve presentation and handwriting. At early level, children's skills in the formation of letters are developing and their confidence to copy a simple sentence is growing. At first level, too few children produce continuous pieces of good quality writing. By second level, children have a knowledge of punctuation, but do not apply this consistently well in their writing. Overall, digital technologies could be used more regularly support children in their writing. Feedback should be developed further so that children know what they need to do to improve. Staff now need to

provide a broader range of experiences to ensure children are skilled in writing across wider range of genre.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy is weak. Too few children are making sufficient progress in their learning. By second level, children are insufficiently skilled across the mathematics and numeracy curriculum and applying these to other curriculum areas. Teachers should continue to develop appropriate breadth of experiences to develop skills progressively.

Number money and measurement

- At early level, children count forwards up to 20 and count on from numbers within ten with confidence. They link daily routines and personal events to time sequences. At first and second levels, the majority of children solve addition and subtraction problems with two digit numbers. The majority of children apply strategies to simple multiplication and division calculations. Across the school, children would benefit from increased opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in a variety of contexts focusing on developing strategies to make accurate calculations.

Shape position and movement

- At early level, children recognise common 2D shapes and 3D objects. Children need to continue to develop mathematical language related to position and movement.

Information handling

- Across the school, children would benefit from increased opportunities to use their information handling skills across the curriculum. The increased use of digital technologies will support this. At first and second levels, children are not sufficiently skilled in using a variety of different methods to display data from surveys.

Attainment over time

- In recent years, the school has had several changes in leadership and therefore no consistency in gathering information to inform how well children are progressing. Moderation activities, supported by the education authority, will help raise staffs' expectations and should be taken forward as planned.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Children are happy at school and speak very enthusiastically about the after-school club where they play games and learn new skills such as cycling. The school provides opportunities for children to engage in sporting activities such as tag rugby, karate and swimming. Teachers should develop a system for tracking achievements and include achievements from out with school.
- The headteacher develops children's leadership skills through the pupil council. Staff should now focus on increasing opportunities for children to continue to develop their leadership skills and take increased responsibilities for themselves and one another. Older children enjoy supporting nursery children when tending to vegetables they are growing in the school poly-tunnel.
- Children enjoy exploring and singing traditional songs and music. They are beginning to understand rhythm as they clap out simple musical patterns. Children are beginning to build their musical confidence as they learn to play a brass instrument.

Equity

- Staff have a developing understanding of the varied barriers children have to learning. It is important that the school identifies and provides interventions to address the individual needs of all children. The headteacher should now ensure that these interventions are evaluated to measure the impact for children over time.

Choice of QI: 2.6 Transitions

- Arrangements to support learners and their families
- Collaborative planning and delivery
- Continuity and progression in learning

- The school works effectively with children and their families to ensure that children settle quickly. Transitions from the nursery are planned well in advance of children moving to school. The nursery class is situated conveniently adjacent to the primary class and children integrate between the two rooms to aid transition. Parents talk positively about the opportunities they have to visit the school informally as part of the transition process. They are fully involved in supporting their child to move from nursery to primary school. Consideration is given to overcome any anxieties from children and their families. Children who start at the school part way through the session, engage in their learning quickly and begin to build positive relationships with staff and their peers.
- The headteacher seeks information from previous schools prior to new children attending the school. The quality of the information received can be inconsistent and at times lacks key data, such as attendance and attainment levels. This leads to the headteacher having to spend considerable time determining children's progress and identifying gaps in their learning. The school needs to pursue its links with partners, schools and the education authority to ensure high quality information is provided prior to any placement at the school.
- A few children are challenged, as part of a multi-stage composite class, to remain on task or to move from one task to another. Staff should consider a variety of teaching approaches to help a few children to remain on task as they transition from one task to another. This should include providing children with appropriate verbal and visual supports to aid transition.
- Progression pathways across the curriculum would support the headteacher in planning for appropriate pace through Curriculum for Excellence levels as children move through the school.
- The school takes account of parents' views as to what makes for an effective transition for their child to Sanday Community School and Kirkwall Grammar School. This includes enhanced transition arrangements for those children with additional support needs and shared placements. Parents should continue to be supported in making informed choices about the next phase of learning for their child, so that learners continue to make progress.
- The headteacher is at the early stage of building effective partnerships with other agencies and schools to support well-timed transition plans. With the support of the education authority, the headteacher needs to continue to make appropriate arrangements to meet and work closely with other agencies and schools, so that important information about learners' progress can be shared in a timely manner. This will ensure that there is continuity of planning for children at times of transition, including those with additional support needs.
- There is scope for the headteacher to continue to work with other partner schools to plan collaboratively to meet the needs of individual children. Pupil learning plans will support this partnership approach. As a result, children will be better prepared to identify their strengths and next steps in learning as they move from one school to another.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

Summarised inspection findings

Eday Primary School Nursery Class

Orkney Islands Council

10 December 2019

Key contextual information

Eday Nursery Class is part of Eday Community School, on a small remote island that is part of the wider Orkney Isles. At the time of inspection there were four children on the roll of the nursery, aged from two years of age. Five morning sessions are available for children, with an extended day on a Thursday. A lead early learning and childcare practitioner works with the teaching headteacher to provide a service for families of the island. Recently, a new practitioner has been recruited to support the future expansion of the service to offer full day provision. There is one main playroom that connects to the primary classroom. The children in the nursery have direct access to a separate, well-resourced outdoor play space. The nursery has access to the facilities of the school including the gym hall, poly-tunnel and wider school grounds.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The newly appointed headteacher has rightly identified the need to refresh the vision, values and aims of the school and nursery. The nursery team are enthusiastic and dedicated to continuing to improve their work. Staff have involved parents in exploring shared values to begin to reflect the work of the nursery. As planned, the nursery should work with children, the school, local community and parents to co-create a statement of vision, values and aims that informs practice. It will be important to use language that is meaningful and accessible to young children.
- There is a new improvement plan in place for the nursery that forms part of the wider school improvement plan. Specific, appropriate improvement priorities have been identified including developing a coherent approach to self-evaluation and planned work with a focus on developing early literacy. The nursery staff team have made a positive start in documenting their reflection on the quality of their service. This includes feedback from parents and children on the things they would like to improve and enjoy within their nursery. There is not yet a strategic approach to self-evaluation that is focused on key priorities. Working with the school, the staff team need to develop their experience, skills and confidence in measuring the impact of improvements on outcomes for children. For example, they could focus their self-evaluation and gather evidence to demonstrate the difference changes make for children's learning and development.
- Practitioners are motivated and beginning to reflect more deeply on the quality of their work as a result of a good range of professional learning opportunities. The team responded positively to professional dialogue throughout the inspection. Recent professional learning on supporting language development, pedagogy and outdoor learning is beginning to support the development of the pedagogy in the nursery. Regularly attending cluster meetings has been beneficial for the nursery team to begin to develop a wider knowledge of practice from other settings. Practitioners appreciate the opportunities for professional dialogue from working with the visiting early years teacher. This shows early positive signs of supporting a culture of

deeper reflection on practice. As a result, practitioners have been able to begin to improve aspects of their work, for example the quality of observations. As this partnership develops, it will be important for this informal dialogue and reflection to inform self-evaluation and measure how it impacts on outcomes for children.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Relationships between practitioners, children and their families are very positive. The responsive and nurturing approach of the team means children are confident and secure in their time at nursery. Most children are motivated and concentrate for extended periods of time, for example, as they build and explore their marble run. Practitioners should continue to adapt experiences to suit children who are new to nursery or at an earlier stage of development. The team should now enhance opportunities to facilitate children's imaginative play. Practitioners should continue their work to review and develop further the use of for example, the book corner in the indoor playroom.
- The interactions of the team are informed by the interests, needs and stage of development of each individual child. Practitioners know each child well and understand what will motivate children to, for example, try new sensory experiences. Vocabulary and commentary is adapted well to suit the age and stage of each individual child. Recent professional learning on language development is beginning to support practitioners to identify how they can develop further interactions with each child. This will support practitioners to build on, extend and challenge children's learning consistently throughout all experiences.
- Practitioners have made some changes to the learning environment. Children are involved in making decisions about the layout and type of resources in their playroom and outdoor area. There is considerable scope to improve opportunities for a more empowering, challenging and creative learning environment. In particular, it will be helpful to raise the profile of experiences with a focus on developing children's schemas. Increasingly, open-ended materials are used in the playroom and outdoors. Good use is made of interesting natural materials from the local area. Moving forward there is scope to increase the use of technology to extend and document children's learning.
- Practitioners plan learning for children based on their individual interests and preferences. Attractive floor books and regularly updated learning stories document their wide range of experiences. Most children and parents enjoy commenting on these. Children's folders include observations, photographs, individual next steps and comments from parents. Work to improve the quality of observations has been helpful to make these more focused. This valuable record of children's time at nursery does not yet reflect the progression of children's skills and significant learning over time. Planned training on the use of floor books will support the team to document the progression of children's skills. The team should continue their work to improve their use of next steps to ensure children are challenged to deepen their learning and apply their skills. As the cycle of assessment, planning, tracking and monitoring develops, this will ensure the team build effectively on children's prior learning. Practitioners are beginning to develop an awareness of early level National Benchmarks. Working across the early level, the team will be able to better understand and moderate the progress made by children.

Opportunities to engage with colleagues in the local cluster will support and inform this work further.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- The curriculum in the nursery is flexible and responsive to children's individual interests and life events. There is a clear commitment to play-based learning. Practitioners are making reference to the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence to plan for children's learning. As planned, the team need to work together with the school to develop a curriculum rationale which reflects their unique, island context. This should incorporate their early work with parents on shared values. This will ensure a shared understanding of the curriculum. There is not yet a progressive approach to delivering their curriculum across the early level. A focus on ensuring depth, challenge and progression in children's learning would be helpful in this shared work with the school.
- Children's learning in early literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing is promoted throughout daily interactions with the team and a wide variety of indoor and outdoor experiences. There is free-flow daily access to outdoor play as an integral part of the session. The team should continue with their work to support those children who are reluctant to access this area. Planting and growing activities help children to learn about the environment and natural world. Interesting planned work to develop a food project with children, parents and the local community will make a valuable contribution to the curriculum. It will be important to ensure approach is integrated into the development of the new curriculum rationale.
- The unique context, frequent shared experiences and carefully planned transition activities result in a positive transition for children who move into P1. There is considerable scope to develop and improve continuity and progression across the early level.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Warm, trusting, close relationships are evident between the team and families. Parents value the daily informal discussions they have with the team. They regularly share information about children's development, likes, dislikes and behaviour. A well-used online platform allows parents to view and comment on frequent examples of activities their child has enjoyed. As a result, parents feel well informed about their child's learning.
- Parents know their views are important to the work of the nursery. They share their views about the nursery and a few suggest ideas for changes or improvements. Recently, practitioners have discussed with parents the possibility of an annual meeting to discuss children's progress in learning. Weekly 'stay and play' sessions involve parents and younger siblings in sharing experiences and learning together in the playroom. Parents appreciate the informal and relaxed atmosphere of these sessions. These opportunities enable parents to feel more involved with their child's learning. Parent helpers assist with trips and outings. The team should consider ways to build on and extend this positive parental involvement. As this work develops, practitioners should reflect with parents on the impact this has on children's learning.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- There is a welcoming, supportive and encouraging atmosphere in the nursery. Relationships between children and practitioners are caring and positive. Children are respected as individuals and supported to respect others. In particular, older children are well supported to develop an understanding of the specific needs of younger children. Practitioners use their in-depth knowledge of children's personal circumstances, interests and needs to plan their work. Children participate in decisions about what they would like to learn about and reviewing the layout of their playroom. The team should continue to build on and develop further approaches to developing children's participation and consider how to link this with children's understanding of their own and others rights.
- Practitioners demonstrate a clear understanding of the wellbeing indicators. There is a need to consider how to develop a more progressive, integrated and meaningful approach to supporting children to develop their understanding of their own wellbeing. This could be done by increasing adult-initiated work on, for example, exploring children's feelings and emotions. Practitioners should support children to make more connections during play activities. Children could take a more active role in risk assessing the outdoor area. Children's interest in caring for the natural world could be linked to exploring the concept of nurture in a way that is accessible to young children.
- Senior managers need to develop further their understanding of their statutory duties. This includes making improvements to recordkeeping procedures regarding children's care needs and maintaining chronologies of significant events. Planned training and professional development for staff is necessary to secure these improvements. Practitioners liaise closely with parents and where necessary, link with other agencies to support children and families. When working with parents or other agencies on a specific next step or strategy, it will be important to document progress in achieving any agreed targets.
- Practitioners are inclusive in their approach and apply their knowledge of child development to identify potential barriers to learning for children. There is an inclusive approach that builds on the strengths and capabilities of each individual child. All children and families are treated fairly and with respect. Practitioners have a good understanding of their responsibility to promote equality through their interactions with families. As planned, practitioners should continue with this work in order to expand children's own awareness of equality and diversity in a meaningful way.

3.2 Securing children's progress

satisfactory

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Overall children are making satisfactory progress in early language and literacy. A few children are making good progress from their prior learning. The majority of children listen well to instructions as they play games together in the gym hall. Most children enjoy discussing topics of interest in detail with practitioners, as they share their in-depth knowledge of, for example, dinosaurs. Planned development of the book corner will support and encourage children to access fiction and non-fiction books more frequently in their play. Most children are developing an awareness of initial letters and their associated sounds. The majority of children recognise that writing has a purpose and enjoy mark making in floor books and in labelling drawings. Children's early literacy skills could be extended through making books, the use of story sacks and by encouraging more regular opportunities to apply skills in real-life experiences. This will ensure all early literacy activities are suitably challenging and engaging for all children.
- In numeracy and mathematics, children are making satisfactory progress, with a few making good progress. Children count to ten with a few counting to 20, as they roll marbles and sort them by colour. Most children use appropriate mathematical language, for example, as they discuss full and empty as they play with water sprays. Most children show a good understanding of positional language as they play outdoors. Whilst there are examples of children using numeracy and mathematics skills in daily routines and during free play, there is potential for this to be developed further. This includes ensuring activities build on prior learning and provide appropriate challenge for all children.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Children are developing an awareness of safety, as they balance on planks or help to make hot chocolate on a fire pit. The planned use of the school grounds and poly-tunnel provides children with frequent contact with the natural world. This supports children to develop further their skills in problem solving. Most children are developing independence skills as they get ready for outdoors and help prepare their healthy snack. There is potential for children to be more independent and responsible throughout all activities in their session. Children's physical skills, including fine motor skills, are developing well through a range of experiences both indoors and outdoors. It is important to ensure there is progression during play activities.

- The learning journey folders are starting to show children's progress in learning. Evidence shows that children are making satisfactory progress in their learning over time, appropriate to their stage of development. Practitioners need to consistently build on what children already know and have achieved, to ensure they make the best possible progress. Children's achievements are celebrated through frequent praise and encouragement and between staff and parents on the online platform. As their system to track children's learning develops, this will provide more robust information about children's progress. With development of quality of observations and identification of next steps, practitioners will be better placed to provide an accurate and clear overview of children's progress.

Choice of QI: 2.6 Transitions

- Quality of support for children and their families
- Collaborative planning and delivery
- Continuity and progression

- Practitioners effectively support children and families to make a positive transition into nursery due to their effective focus on positive relationships. Time is taken to build trust and meet the needs of children and parents new to the setting. Settling in processes are flexible and adapted to the temperament and needs of the individual. Home visits are used well to develop a holistic picture of children at home and nursery. As a result, children settle well into their nursery experience and parents feel well supported through this process. Positive relationships are established and build upon to ensure frequent, open communication between families and practitioners.
- Highly effective pastoral transitions support children well to move into the primary classroom. Frequent contact, joint activities, shared lunches and contact in the playground mean that children feel confident and secure in the school space. Good communication ensures children's individual interests and skills are shared between staff. A next step is to ensure there is better continuity of learning across the early level to support children to build more effectively on their prior learning. The team should continue with their work to improve the quality of record keeping, for example when working with other agencies to support children's development.

1. Quality of care and support

The children were cared for in a supportive setting where they felt safe and secure. Home visits to families new to the island helped them feel welcomed and included and supported children to form close attachments with staff. As a result, children were settled and happy to attend nursery.

Staff knew the needs of the children well and worked closely with parents to support children's health and wellbeing. Children's personal plans were current, up to date and contained information to enable staff provide children with the care and support they needed. This led to good outcomes for children.

Staff treated children with kindness and patience. They encouraged children to share, play together and make choices. This meant children were listened to and their opinions valued. Opportunities for literacy and numeracy development was promoted through games and activities, helping children to achieve and progress.

The manager and staff had a good knowledge of how best to safeguard and protect children. However, recording systems and procedures were not robust to effectively protect children from harm or neglect. We supported the manager on how best to record information and the authority advised that they were enrolled on child protection training level two. Information recorded in the children's chronologies was not always a significant event impacting on the wider world of the child.

The document to support staff can be found at:

<https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/3670/Practice%20guide%20to%20chronologies%202017.pdf>

Staff were knowledgeable and well informed about children who required medication. However, best practice procedures were not followed when storing medication on the premises. This was addressed immediately. The document to support staff can be found at:

<https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/1427/Childrens%20service%20medication%20guidance.pdf>

Committed staff were working closely with the local authority to develop their skills in observation, planning and assessment. Children's progress was recorded through learning stories and through the Seesaw app, helping to keep parents informed and supporting children to achieve.

Children were provided with healthy snack and meal choices they enjoyed eating. At times, some children ate snack and lunch with the school, supporting their transition into P1. Children less confident were able to eat snack in the familiar nursery environment. This helped children feel safe and more able to try new foods.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

2. Quality of environment

The small school community setting meant children were familiar and happy in their environment. Children were able to access the hall and community facilities, providing them with opportunities to run around and keep fit. The linked door to the classroom supported staff and the children's safety with immediate access to help if required. This also helped the children feel part of the whole school community and promoted a culture where everyone felt included.

The nursery environment was bright and welcoming. The new kitchen area and child height sinks looked attractive and supported children's independence. However, some of the resources looked less inviting and would benefit from being replaced or cleaned to ensure they are safe for play.

The indoor learning environment promoted children's choice and independent play. Children enjoyed playing with dinosaurs in the sand and with the wooden train on the floor. There were some natural resources, loose parts and wooden blocks promoting opportunities for open-ended and creative play. However, there was not enough challenge or differentiation to fully meet the developmental needs of the children attending. Areas such as the role play corner would benefit from the addition of real life resources for young children to explore their emotions and learn through familiar play. Staff discussed how they hoped to develop the book corner with comfy cushions and soft fabrics, providing children with a safe and attractive place to play quietly (see recommendation).

Children were able to free flow between outdoors and indoors throughout the session. This allowed them to access fresh air and keep fit and well. The nursery garden was an attractive natural space where children could explore freely and develop their understanding of the world around them. Some loose parts such as wooden planks provided opportunities for problem solving and working together.

The children were able to access and explore the wider school environment. This provided opportunities for building relationships with the older children, contributing to a culture of belonging and helping each other. Other opportunities to visit the island shop and beach will help the children grow into responsible citizens and be a valued part of their community.

Care Inspectorate grade: adequate

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and two recommendations. As a result of this inspection one recommendation has been met and one has been carried forward.

Recommendation

- To ensure children receive high quality early learning and childcare, the provider should ensure all children are able to access a range of resources which stimulate their imagination, curiosity and creativity.
This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling' (HSCS 1.30).

Supporting documents include:

My Creative Journey

www.thehub.careinspectorate.com

The Loose Parts Toolkit

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/405223/loose-parts-play-toolkit.pdf>.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

10 December 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In September 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Eday Primary School and Nursery Class. 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.

- The new headteacher's appropriate focus on improvement and involvement of parents and partners in the development of the school.
- Positive relationships fostered between the headteacher, staff, parents and children. Children are well supported in moving from nursery into P1 and onward to other schools.
- Polite children who are developing skills of independence and positive attitudes to their learning.

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

- Raise attainment and improve children's progress in learning.
- Ensure effective professional learning and development results in improved quality of learning and teaching.
- Develop rigorous self-evaluation based on robust evidence leading to improved outcomes for children.
- Continue to improve the learning environment and curriculum.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#). 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 Eday Primary School and Nursery Class

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

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Leadership of change	satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Securing children's progress	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for the nursery class

Care Inspectorate standards	Grade
Quality of care and support	good
Quality of environment	adequate

Requirements/recommendations made by Care Inspectorate for the nursery class

Requirements

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and one recommendation. As a result of this inspection one recommendation has been carried forward.

Recommendation

- To ensure children receive high quality early learning and childcare, the provider should ensure all children are able to access a range of resources which stimulate their imagination, curiosity and creativity.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling'. (HSCS 1.30)

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/inspection-reports/reports-page/?id=2495>

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Orkney Islands Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a joint support visit with Orkney Islands Council within six months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Orkney Islands Council the details of this support visit. When we return we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Susan Gow
HM Inspector

Lorraine Hendry
Care Inspector