3 November 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In September 2026, a team of HM Inspectors of Education visited Fair Isle Primary School and Pre-School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

Fair Isle Pre-School was inspected by Care Inspectorate within the past 18 months. The local authority and headteacher had the option to include the pre-school as part of this inspection. We have agreed with the local authority and headteacher's decision that the pre-school will be part of this inspection.

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

- Very strong, positive, nurturing relationships among all adults and children. Across the establishment, all children are thriving. They feel understood, valued and very well supported.
- Personalised, high-quality learning and teaching across the curriculum. In the school and nursery, children develop a wide range of transferable knowledge and skills. In particular, they demonstrate a rich knowledge of their island environment, culture and heritage.
- Outstanding collaborative approaches to working with the island community and wider partners. All children benefit greatly from authentic and purposeful learning experiences across highly engaging contexts and projects. Their learning is extended further through well-considered partnerships staff develop across Shetland, Scotland and internationally.
- Exceptional approaches to wellbeing, inclusion and equality. Across the school and nursery, all children achieve outcomes of a very high quality. Supporting children's wellbeing during times of transition is an outstanding feature of the school's work.

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

- As planned, continue to design and embed high-quality approaches to assessment.

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We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using two 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 HMIE's evaluations for Fair Isle Primary and Pre-School

Quality indicators for the primary school	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	**very good**
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	**excellent**
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school (4th edition) Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the ELC's work using two quality indicators from the Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors.

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	**very good**
Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	**excellent**

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the HMIE website at: Fair Isle Primary School | Inspection Report | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland

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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. Shetland Islands Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Lisa Marie McDonnell
HM Inspector

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland

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