

26 May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2026, a team of HM Inspectors of Education visited Stromness Early Learning and Childcare. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and worked closely with the manager and practitioners.

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

- Children are enthusiastic learners who display creativity and imagination in their play. They are empowered to lead their own learning as they explore the richly resourced play spaces. Children have a strong understanding of their own wellbeing and show empathy for their friends. They support each other, share and cooperate together.
- The manager has developed a broad curriculum and planning approaches which take very good account of children's needs and interests. Staff use the local community and wider area very effectively to enrich children's learning experiences. Children acquire important skills for life and work as they participate in activities in their town and link with its people.
- The manager ensures that play spaces are exceptionally well resourced with interesting, and varied artefacts, photographs and books. As a result, children are highly motivated and fully engaged.
- Children experience emotional warmth and nurturing approaches from staff who have created calm play spaces and unhurried routines. Care plans are developed in partnership with families, helping to maintain strong continuity between home and nursery.

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

- Continue to develop greater consistency among staff when planning and recording next steps in learning for children.
- Further enhance learning and teaching by extending digital technology experiences, and fully embedding children's rights in the day-to-day work of the playroom.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate some of the setting's work using three quality indicators from the [Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors](#). Quality indicators help early learning and childcare settings, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each setting, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish early learning and childcare settings are doing.

Here are HMIE's evaluations for Stromness Early Learning and Childcare

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Curriculum	very good
Learning, teaching and assessment	very good
Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	very good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors	

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

What happens next?

We are confident that the setting 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 setting's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its settings.

May Geddes
 HM Inspector

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