



**Item: 6**

**Education, Communities and Housing Committee: 3 June 2026.**

**Education Scotland Inspection – Stromness Primary School.**

**Report by Director of Education, Communities and Housing.**

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## **1. Overview**

- 1.1. This report presents Education Scotland’s letter on the inspection of Stromness Primary School, for members’ information.
- 1.2. In March 2026, Education Scotland undertook a full inspection of Stromness Primary School.
- 1.3. The inspection team found the following strengths in the school’s work:
  - The headteacher has successfully developed and taken forward a number of initial priority areas for improvement since taking up post. These are beginning to result in positive improvements in children’s outcomes and learning experiences.
  - Staff create welcoming and nurturing environments for children to learn. They are working well collaboratively to improve children's levels of engagement. This is helping children to be successful and confident in their learning.
  - Teachers are improving their understanding of national standards and expectations in judging children's progress. This is resulting in more reliable progress and attainment information for children. Overall, children are attaining well in key areas of literacy and numeracy.
- 1.4. The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the Headteacher and the Service Manager (Primary Education):
  - Continue to develop whole-school approaches to self-evaluation and improvement planning. This should include all staff having planned opportunities to engage with highly effective practice locally and nationally.
  - Continue to raise the attainment of all children in all curriculum areas. Teachers should embed at pace programmes of learning for children in all curriculum areas.
  - Develop consistent, high quality learning experiences for children at every stage. Teachers should continue to improve strategies to ensure all children’s learning needs are met well in all aspects of their learning.

- Develop strengthened approaches to wellbeing and inclusion across the whole school. Children need to have increased opportunities to evaluate, express and learn about their wellbeing.
- Senior leaders and the local authority have worked together to take forward areas for improvement in safeguarding which required urgent action at the time of inspection. HM Inspectors are satisfied with the response taken by the education authority and school and do not require any further information. As a result, senior leaders and the local authority should continue as planned to monitor and review the impact of this work over time.

1.5. The evaluation given to the quality indicators for the school are as follows:

- Leader of change – satisfactory.
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment – satisfactory.
- Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusions – satisfactory.
- Raising attainment and achievement – good.

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

1.7. The areas for improvement, outlined above, will be taken forward by the school, supported by the Education Service. They will feature in the school improvement plan over the next few years.

## 2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:

- Note the inspection letter in respect of Stromness Primary School, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, issued by Education Scotland on 26 May 2026.

### **For Further Information please contact:**

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## Implications of Report

1. **Financial** – Not applicable.
2. **Legal** – Not applicable.
3. **Corporate Governance** – Not applicable.
4. **Human Resources** – Not applicable.
5. **Equalities** – An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for performance reporting.
6. **Island Communities Impact** – An Island Communities Impact Assessment is not required for performance reporting.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
  - Growing our economy.
  - Strengthening our Communities.
  - Developing our Infrastructure.
  - Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
  - Cost of Living.
  - Sustainable Development.
  - Local Equality.
  - Improving Population Health.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk** – Not applicable.
10. **Risk** – Not applicable.
11. **Procurement** – Not applicable.
12. **Health and Safety** – Not applicable.
13. **Property and Assets** – Not applicable.
14. **Information Technology** – Not applicable.
15. **Cost of Living** – Not applicable.

## List of Background Papers

None

## Appendix

Appendix 1 – Inspection Letter from Education Scotland.

26 May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2026, a team of HM Inspectors of Education visited Stromness 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.

- The headteacher has successfully developed and taken forward a number of initial priority areas for improvement since taking up post. These are beginning to result in positive improvements in children's outcomes and learning experiences.
- Staff create welcoming and nurturing environments for children to learn. They are working well collaboratively to improve children's levels of engagement. This is helping children to be successful and confident in their learning.
- Teachers are improving their understanding of national standards and expectations in judging children's progress. This is resulting in more reliable progress and attainment information for children. Overall, children are attaining well in key areas of literacy and numeracy.

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

- Continue to develop whole-school approaches to self-evaluation and improvement planning. This should include all staff having planned opportunities to engage with highly effective practice locally and nationally.
- Continue to raise the attainment of all children in all curriculum areas. Teachers should embed at pace programmes of learning for children in all curriculum areas.
- Develop consistent, high quality learning experiences for children at every stage. Teachers should continue to improve strategies to ensure all children's learning needs are met well in all aspects of their learning.
- Develop strengthened approaches to wellbeing and inclusion across the whole school. Children need to have increased opportunities to evaluate, express and learn about their wellbeing.
- Senior leaders and the local authority have worked together to take forward areas for improvement in safeguarding which required urgent action at the time of inspection. HM Inspectors are satisfied with the response taken by the education authority and school and

do not require any further information. As a result, senior leaders and the local authority should continue as planned to monitor and review the impact of this work over time.

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 HMIE's evaluations for Stromness Primary School

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

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

JohnPaul Cassidy  
HM Inspector

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