



Item: 4

Education, Communities and Housing Committee: 3 June 2026.

Education Scotland Inspection – The Strynd Nursery.

Report by Director of Education, Communities and Housing.

1. Overview

- 1.1. This report presents Education Scotland’s letter on the inspection of The Strynd Nursery, for members’ information.
- 1.2. In March 2026, inspectors from Education Scotland undertook an inspection of The Strynd Nursery. This inspection used the new Quality Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare sectors and as it was a single agency inspection, three quality indicators were used.
- 1.3. The inspection team found the following strengths in the nursery’s work:
 - Children who are confident, motivated and engage well in their nursery experiences. They are curious and excited learners.
 - The nurturing and inclusive ethos created by the manager and practitioners. This promotes a sense of community with very positive relationships where everyone is welcomed and valued.
 - Staff, who strive to understand each child as an individual, each with unique strengths and needs. They interact with children in a very natural and relaxed way that helps support all children to develop at their own pace.
 - The extensive, interesting outdoor space that has been successfully developed over time. This offers children opportunities to be physically active, curious, use their imagination and explore the natural world.
- 1.4. The following areas for improvement were identified:
 - Staff should develop further the curriculum to ensure it reflects fully the unique context and needs of children. Consideration should be given to how the curriculum helps children develop the skills and knowledge they need in today’s world.
 - Continue to develop approaches to using assessment information to identify what children need to learn next. Staff should build on existing ways they respond to children’s interests to provide planned experiences that enthuse and motivate all children.

- 1.4 Three quality indicators from the new Quality Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare sectors were evaluated:
- Curriculum – Satisfactory.
 - Learning Teaching and Assessment –Good.
 - Ensuring Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality –Good.
- 1.5. The report was very positive and the manager and practitioners at The Strynd Nursery will continue to develop their practice as they grow their team and move to their new location in July.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
- i. Note the inspection letter in respect of the Strynd Nursery, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, issued by Education Scotland on 12 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.

12 May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2026, a team of HM Inspectors of Education visited The Strynd Nursery. 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 who are confident, motivated and engage well in their nursery experiences. They are curious and excited learners.
- The nurturing and inclusive ethos created by the manager and practitioners. This promotes a sense of community with very positive relationships where everyone is welcomed and valued.
- Staff, who strive to understand each child as an individual, each with unique strengths and needs. They interact with children in a very natural and relaxed way that helps support all children to develop at their own pace.
- The extensive, interesting outdoor space that has been successfully developed over time. This offers children opportunities to be physically active, curious, use their imagination and explore the natural world.

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

- Staff should develop further the curriculum to ensure it reflects fully the unique context and needs of children. Consideration should be given to how the curriculum helps children develop the skills and knowledge they need in today's world.
- Continue to develop approaches to using assessment information to identify what children need to learn next. Staff should build on existing ways they respond to children's interests to provide planned experiences that enthuse and motivate all children.

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 The Strynd Nursery

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Curriculum	satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	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:

[Strynd Nursery, The | 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.

Barbara Daly
HM Inspector

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