Papa Westray School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Papa Westray Primary School
Papa Westray
Orkney
KW17 2BU

Telephone: 01857 644 226

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 September 2026

Service provided by:
Orkney Islands Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001951

Service no:
CS2004060211

About the service

Papa Westray School Nursery provides a care service to a maximum of four children at any one time aged from two years to attending primary school. The service will comply with the following minimum staffing ratio: one adult to four children. The service will operate during term time only.

The nursery forms part of Papa Westray Primary School on the island of Papa Westray, Orkney. The playroom has direct access to toilets, kitchen facilities and an outdoor play area, as well as to the wider school grounds.

There was one child present at the time of the inspection.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 03 September 2026 between 10:15 and 14:45. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with children using the service
- received one response to our request for feedback from parents and staff
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, nurturing relationships and felt happy, confident and secure in the nursery.
- Staff knew children well and used their interests to support learning, development and wellbeing.
- Children enjoyed high-quality play and learning that promoted creativity, problem solving, literacy, numeracy and independence.
- Strong family partnerships supported children's care and development, with parents feeling welcomed, listened to and involved.
- Leadership was reflective and supportive, driving improvement through self-evaluation and professional learning.
- Quality assurance and safety processes were effective overall, but improvements to toilet facilities were needed to strengthen infection prevention and control.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as **very good.**

The nursery was included in the school's vision, values and aims, which had recently been reviewed alongside staff, children and families. The vision focused on creating a kind, inclusive and welcoming community where children were encouraged to take pride in themselves, their learning and their environment. This was reflected well during the inspection. Staff demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion through everyday experiences. For example, staff supported children to understand and value individual differences and family choices. The nursery's vision and values were embedded in practice and supported a culture of inclusion, respect and belonging.

Staff spoke positively about the leadership of the nursery and said they felt valued, supported and included. They described working well together as a team and felt their ideas were listened to and acted upon. Regular staff meetings, support and supervision sessions known as 'good conversations', and professional discussions supported communication and continuous improvement. Staff particularly valued support from the local authority, which helped identify strengths, training needs and future development opportunities. These approaches contributed to staff feeling respected and involved in the service.

Parent's views were sought and valued through daily conversations, personal plan meetings and input to learning folders. Parents told us they felt comfortable approaching staff and were confident they would be listened to. Feedback from families had influenced practice. For example, parents enjoyed the nursery's recipe activities and numeracy experiences. In response, staff developed adaptable recipe templates which children could take home and use with their families, helping to extend learning beyond the nursery. Parents described feeling involved and valued the strong relationships they had with staff. There was potential to involve families more directly in wider nursery developments through approaches such as the self-evaluation floor book. Overall, positive partnerships with families contributed to the ongoing development of the service.

The nursery had a clear improvement plan and involved the whole staff team in self-evaluation. Staff used a self-evaluation floor book to record developments, reflect on practice and gather evidence of impact. Photographs, observations and audits were used to support this process. Numeracy had recently been a focus, with staff describing how training had improved learning experiences and increased challenge for children. One example was a child had created a calendar exploring seasons, months and important events to support their understanding. Audits had also identified opportunities to strengthen learning through increased shape experiences. Staff reported that children were more engaged and motivated when appropriately challenged. Self-evaluation was effective and supported positive outcomes for children.

Staff benefited from a range of professional learning opportunities provided by the local authority and external agencies. Training had supported improvements in practice, including recent developments in numeracy. Staff also valued opportunities to visit other settings and share ideas with colleagues. Quality assurance arrangements included policy reviews, audits, reflective discussions and ongoing monitoring of practice. The small team structure supported peer support and professional dialogue. New staff were supported through a clear induction process, including a handbook, induction checklist and national induction resources. Professional learning, quality assurance and induction arrangements supported staff development and ongoing improvements of the service.

Children play and learn — 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as **very good.**

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of child development and used relevant theory to inform their practice. The lead practitioner explained how their qualifications and ongoing training had strengthened their understanding of how children learn through play. This had supported them to provide very good experiences which encouraged children to express themselves, follow their interests and develop new skills. Practice was thoughtful and responsive to individual needs and stages of development. Staff knowledge and understanding contributed to high-quality learning experiences for children.

The child was very happy, confident and highly engaged throughout the inspection. They freely chose where to play and independently accessed a wide range of resources indoors and outdoors. Outdoors, during the inspection, the child explored drawing with crayons on tiles, before discovering they fitted through the lock of the shed door. This developed into an enthusiastic game of hide and seek involving another child and an adult. There was lots of excitement as the child hid the crayons and eagerly waited for others to find them. The child also enjoyed imaginative play with small world toys, placing figures in and out of a combine harvester and working out how different parts opened and closed. Opportunities to develop creativity, curiosity, imagination and problem-solving skills were evident throughout the session. The child's interests were nurtured through engaging experiences that supported their learning and development.

Language, literacy and numeracy were well supported through resources, daily routines and staff interactions. The environment contained a range of books, mark-making materials, print and numeracy resources. Recent developments following a numeracy audit had strengthened opportunities for mathematical learning. For example, at snack time the child used drawings of people and plates on a whiteboard to work out how many plates were needed. The child also followed a simple recipe to make guacamole, supporting early numeracy and independence skills. Literacy development was further enhanced through interactive story experiences which encouraged the child to take an active role in storytelling. Literacy, language and numeracy were embedded well within everyday experiences.

Staff interactions were nurturing, responsive and skilled. Staff knew the child very well and carefully balanced support with opportunities for independent exploration. They allowed the child time to think and solve problems before stepping in when needed. The child confidently invited staff into their play and sought support when required. For example, during a game of hide and seek with crayons, staff extended the learning by modelling how to give clues such as "hotter" and "colder", encouraging the child to think, problem solve and remain engaged in the game. Staff used comments, modelling and open-ended questions to extend learning and thinking. They had thoughtfully considered the importance of promoting independence, and opportunities to develop sharing, cooperation and understanding of other's feelings were built into play experiences. Staff interactions supported children's confidence, wellbeing and learning very effectively.

Planning was highly responsive and based on children's interests. Staff used a balance of intentional and spontaneous planning to extend learning. One example was a child's interest in The Hungry Caterpillar, which had been developed into learning about butterflies, life cycles and symmetry. Learning was recorded through observations, photographs and children's voices within learning journals. Weekly photographs were also shared with families, encouraging conversations about learning at home and supporting strong partnerships. Families also shared home experiences with nursery. Tracking and monitoring arrangements enabled staff to discuss progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and identify appropriate next steps. Overall, planning, assessment and tracking were effective and supported children to make very good progress in their learning and development.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as **good**, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Staff were warm, caring and nurturing in their interactions with children. The child appeared happy, relaxed and secure within the setting and confidently approached adults for help, comfort and support. Strong relationships were evident, with staff showing a genuine interest in children's families, interests and experiences. Flexible approaches to settling children ensured individual needs were met. For example, one younger child attended shorter sessions supported by their parent while becoming familiar with nursery. Staff used the child's interest in farming to engage them in play and build trusting relationships. Nurturing relationships helped children feel safe, valued and emotionally secure.

The child was familiar with daily routines and responded positively to the structure of the day. They demonstrated independence through everyday tasks, such as clearing away plates after snack and participating in a new story routine before going home. Staff had carefully considered transitions and adapted approaches to meet individual needs. The child used a timer to help prepare for changes in routine and, when additional time was needed, staff responded flexibly by resetting it together. Following feedback from a parent, children were also given opportunities to become familiar with relief staff before they worked in the setting. Consistent staffing further supported children's confidence and security. Routines and transitions were well planned and supported children's wellbeing.

Appropriate measures were in place to support children's safety. Staffing arrangements ensured children received the care and attention they required throughout the day. Risk assessments identified risks, benefits and actions to minimise harm. Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of child protection responsibilities and records showed appropriate action had been taken to support children when needed. Accident and incident records were completed fully and signed by parents. The setting was clean and good hygiene practices were evident, including handwashing before eating. We discussed encouraging handwashing after meals to further strengthen infection prevention and control. However, there was no door separating the children's toilet area from the main room. The toilets were positioned directly beside the food preparation area, with no physical barrier between these spaces. As a result, this arrangement did not fully support Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) risks through effective separation of these areas. Until a permanent arrangement can be put in place, the manager should develop a risk assessment for the playroom taking account of potential risks **(see requirement one)**.

Mealtimes were relaxed, social and enjoyable experiences. Children from the school joined the nursery child for snack, supporting friendships and positive social interactions. Conversations flowed naturally and children demonstrated kindness towards one another, such as helping pour drinks and sharing food. The child proudly described making guacamole using a recipe displayed on the wall and independently spread this on toast and self-served fruit. Staff sat with children during snack and lunch, creating a calm atmosphere and modelling positive social interactions. Lunchtime arrangements within the school supported the child to enjoy healthy meals alongside their peers. Mealtimes promoted independence, wellbeing and positive relationships.

Personal plans, including support plans, were in place for children and were regularly reviewed with families. These reflected children's current needs, interests and strengths, enabling staff to provide personalised support. Staff knew children well and could confidently discuss their care and learning needs. Inclusive practice was evident throughout the setting, including targeted support for speech and language development. Children were fully involved in the life of the school and wider community through shared activities, local visits and community experiences. Families spoke positively about the nursery and valued the welcoming atmosphere and regular communication from staff. Children and families experienced inclusive, individualised support which promoted wellbeing, belonging and positive experiences.

Requirements

1. By 06 October 2026, the provider must ensure that children's health and wellbeing is appropriately supported and promoted within the service. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

a) Ensure an effective risk assessment is in place for the playroom environment, identifying any potential hazards associated with access to the toilet area and detailing the control measures implemented to minimise risks to children.

b) Provide an appropriate plan detailing the timescales for installing a suitable door to separate the children's toilets from the playroom.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'If I require intimate personal care, this is carried out in a dignified way, with my privacy and personal preferences respected' (HSCS 1.4) and 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.scot.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good

Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good

Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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