ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

Item: 10

Education, Communities and Housing Committee: 11 November 2026.

Care Inspectorate – Stenness Community School Nursery.

Report by Director of Education, Communities and Housing.

1. Overview

1.1. This report presents the Care Inspectorate's findings from an unannounced inspection of Stenness Community School Nursery, for members' information.

1.2. On 1 September 2026, the Care Inspectorate undertook an unannounced inspection of Stenness Community School Nursery. They considered a range of information, including reviewing previous inspection findings and intelligence gathered since the last inspection, reviewing documents, speaking to parents, staff and children, as well as observing practice.

1.3. The Care Inspectorate used the Quality Framework for Early Learning and Childcare, a framework that is shared with His Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI). They used three quality indicators to inspect against.

1.4. The Care Inspectorate identified significant strengths in the setting's work, including:

- Children were very happy, confident and settled.
- Warm nurturing relationships created a safe and supportive environment.
- Strong partnerships with families enhanced outcomes for children.
- High-quality play experiences promoted curiosity, creativity, independence and learning.
- Staff worked effectively as a team and engaged in meaningful self-evaluation which contributed to continuous improvement.
- Quality assurance and safety systems were generally effective.

1.5. The Care Inspectorate required the Nursery to ensure that children's health, wellbeing, privacy and dignity are appropriately supported and promoted within the service. To do this the Nursery must, at a minimum, undertake to:

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

1.6. The quality indicators were graded as follows:

- Leadership (Leadership and Management of Staff and Resources)– Very Good.
- Children play and learn (Play, Learning and Development) – Very Good.
- Children are supported to achieve (Nurturing Care and Support)– Good

1.7. Major strengths were found in the setting's work and very few areas for improvement were identified. The Care Inspectorate requirement referred to the fitting of a full height door on the entrance to the children's toilet area and this impacted on the Nurturing Care and Support Grade. Other than this requirement, all areas of practice at the setting were recognised to be of high quality.

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:

i. Note the inspection report in respect of Stenness Community School Nursery issued by the Care Inspectorate on 1 September 2026, attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

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 Equalities 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 report