

Summarised inspection findings

Rousay Community School

Orkney Islands Council

SEED No: 6002129

23 January 2018

Key contextual information

Rousay Community School is a remote rural school, located on the Island of Rousay. It serves children living on the islands of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre. At the time of the inspection there were 11 children educated in a single class, ranging in age from P2 to P7. The school also has a nursery class. Three children attend the morning nursery session it provides. Session 2016 – 2017 saw the school reduce from two classes to one. Two teachers team-taught this class to support this change. The headteacher has teaching responsibility for the class four days per week.

The headteacher has been in post for six years, two of which were in the capacity of acting headteacher. Due to a planned absence, an acting headteacher took up post the week prior to the inspection. The local authority representative supported the school throughout the inspection process to ensure that this very recent change in leadership didn't hinder the gathering of inspection evidence.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

Indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- Strategic planning for continuous improvement
- Implementing improvement and change

- The school reviewed its vision, values and aims in consultation with the school community last session. These, in addition to the mission statement 'Learning for Life', are prominently displayed at the school entrance. They appropriately reflect the community it serves. Building on this positive start, we have asked the school to continue to develop the school community's knowledge, understanding and application of the vision, values and aims.
- All staff have a good understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school and the uniqueness of the islands it serves. Strategic planning takes appropriate account of raising attainment for all and closing the poverty-related attainment gap through the development of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Aspects of these developments are clearly identified as being supported by the Pupil Equity Fund and the Scottish Attainment Challenge. The school has identified the need to make use of a broader range of data about the local community in order to identify what barriers are affecting attainment.
- As a result of an effective transition planning, including meetings with the previous headteacher and robust support from the local authority, the recent change of school leadership has been well-supported and successful. In the short time the acting headteacher has been in post, she has quickly established effective relationships with the children, parents and the staff team. Participation in monthly 'Leaders of Learning' meetings has already begun and will continue to provide the acting headteacher with

regular opportunities for leadership training and sharing of good practice. In addition, the local authority's planned development of the 'Peedie Cluster' will support leaders of one teacher schools, such as Rousay, in self-evaluation and moderation activities in the near future.

- The school benefits from a supportive Parent Council and also from the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust. Although plans for school improvement are shared with the Parent Council, they are not yet sufficiently involved in co-constructing and evaluating plans for improvement. The introduction of joint Headteacher/Parent Council chairperson meetings is enabling the school to increase their knowledge of national priorities, receive training and share practice with other schools across the Orkney islands. This has been welcomed by the Parent Council and is enabling the school to learn from beyond its own community.
- All children are actively involved in making decisions about their school through their participation in the Pupil Council and/or ECO Committee. Junior Road Safety Officers lead initiatives designed to promote road safety. The children feel that they are listened to and that their ideas are implemented. They are currently exploring their wish to keep chickens and are involved in research about the practicalities and costs associated with this. Pupil Council audits currently focus on aspects such as wall displays and the storage of materials rather than learning. The school has already recognised the need to develop learner's voice and this is an area for further focus in their strategic plan.
- Staff benefit from annual review meetings where their individual training needs are identified. Leadership opportunities are provided to staff. For example, leadership of special events such as Magnus 900, ECO-schools and leading a teacher learning community.
- The school improvement plan appropriately reflects the unique context of the school, in addition to local and national priorities. The headteacher successfully led the school through a period of significant change over the last 18 months. Ensuring the involvement of all members of the school community, the formation of a single class school structure has been successfully introduced. Now that this has been established, it is time to focus on raising attainment across the school.
- Overall, the pace of change is not sufficiently challenging. The school has been developing its approaches to self-evaluation. However, these are still at an early stage of development. Although a quality assurance calendar is in place, the restructuring of the school and recent staffing changes have impacted on the effectiveness of its implementation. The school has identified the need to further develop effective and ongoing self-evaluation, informed by more robust analysis of evidence. As a result, improving self-evaluation is appropriately identified as a key priority within this year's school improvement plan. This should include a more focussed, strategic approach to monitoring and measuring the impact of development priorities, including those supported by Pupil Equity Funding.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

Indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- Learning and engagement
- Quality of teaching
- Effective use of assessment
- Planning, tracking and monitoring

- The school provides a nurturing and supportive environment for the children. Effective relationships were observed between the children and between staff and children. Older children instinctively provided assistance to younger children when required. Families who have recently joined the school feel welcomed and children have settled quickly as a result. A high standard of behaviour was observed throughout all inspection activities and all children engaged appropriately with their learning.
- Most of the children are motivated by their learning. Although tasks provided are differentiated for the younger and older children, this needs to be developed further to ensure that each child's learning needs are being appropriately met. Greater account should be taken of children's age and stage of development, informed by assessment data. The expectations for some children is too low and the pace of learning needs to be increased. Children are provided with some opportunities to say what they already know about a topic and what they want to learn. The heavy reliance on commercially produced worksheets to support learning across most curricular areas is limiting children's ability to develop skills, particularly in writing. Approaches to develop independent learning are at an early stage of development. There is considerable scope to develop children's independence, personalisation and choice within learning.
- The school environment provides a range of indoor and outdoor learning spaces. The school garden benefits from a poly tunnel and raised beds, and there is a well-equipped play park within the school grounds. Funding provided by the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust has helped fund the development of outdoor learning, most recently through the purchase of wet-weather clothing. Participation in annual archaeological digs, and the development of habitats for Corncrake in partnership with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), is helping the children learn about their surrounding environment and the history of the island. Opportunities such as these are being used well to develop children's understanding of skills for learning, life and work. The school's plans to further develop its approaches to outdoor learning should be taken forward, taking due account of its recently revised curriculum rationale.
- Teachers make use of a range of technologies to support learning and teaching, however the unreliability of internet access makes this problematic. Lessons are being interrupted by a loss of connectivity. Children regularly use laptops to access digital learning programmes, with most doing so confidently. Staff make effective use of photography to capture children's learning and inform assessment processes. For example, capturing the effectiveness of team challenges in gymnastics. There is a need to extend children's use of

technology in order to develop skills in word-processing, information handling and presentation.

- The quality of teaching observed was good. Despite visiting specialists working in the school once every three weeks, staff demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of individual children. Learning intentions and success criteria are used consistently and children are involved in identifying success criteria. Effective questioning is enabling children to develop higher order thinking skills.
- All children have an opportunity to set learning targets for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Contained within their 'Learning Jotter', samples of work are added to evidence progress. We have asked the school to review the impact and purpose of these, to ensure that they are contributing to children's understanding of themselves as a learner. Current targets are too vague and children are not yet able to describe the skills they are developing. The use of formative assessment feedback in children's work is limited. Staff should review their approaches to formative assessment, including self- and peer-assessment, to ensure it improves children's progress.
- A range of assessment activities are used to track and monitor individual children's progress, including professional judgement, standardised assessments and published materials. This is monitored at both school and individual level on a termly basis. Children with additional support needs have appropriate planning in place. This is reviewed regularly with the involvement of the child, parent and partner agencies where appropriate. The school has identified the need to review its curriculum pathways against the national guidance to ensure their appropriateness and to strengthen the validity of their professional judgement. Staff are at the early stages of engaging with national benchmarks. Greater use should now be made of this data to enable an increase in the pace of learning. Opportunities for moderation are currently being developed through the introduction of the 'Peedie cluster' and should be used to inform expectations for attainment and achievement.
- Staff have a clear understanding of the barriers to learning, such as those living in socio-economic deprivation or having additional support needs. The local authority's staged intervention process is used to support identified children and appropriate plans are in place for them. School tracking systems enable the progress of these children to be monitored and used to inform future planning however, this is not yet leading to sufficient progress.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning Pathways

- Progressive learning pathways have been developed for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These are still at an early stage of implementation. Having identified the need to develop these further to ensure greater relevance, coherence and progression, the school should progress their plans to review these pathways against their learning and teaching programmes and national guidance. The school's recently reviewed curriculum rationale should continue to be developed to ensure it reflects all aspects of school life, including the nursery.
- The introduction of a progressive health and wellbeing curricular programme is a key development priority this session. To ensure that the development of health and wellbeing is progressive throughout the school, we have asked staff to ensure that this builds on the learning undertaken in nursery, as this is currently not reflected in the new programme. Staff engagement with the national benchmarks for health and wellbeing will support this work while increasing staff understanding of national expectations in respect to health and wellbeing.
- The school's social subject project plans were reviewed last session to provide greater flexibility and to reflect the school's restructuring to a single teacher school. This seven year programme supports the development of skills for children at all stages of Curriculum for Excellence. Opportunities to increase children's personalisation and choice are identified within the whole school strategic overview. Contexts for learning are balanced and appropriately reflect the unique context of the islands of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre. There is scope for these environments to be utilised further, particularly in relation to the development of inter-disciplinary learning. Orkney wide inter-disciplinary learning projects are developed annually and are designed to reflect the unique aspects of Orkney. These are being successfully implemented and staff are benefiting from developing these collaboratively.
- The introduction of 1+2 language was a key development priority last session. The school's first language is French. The school makes use of the local authorities French progression framework and should continue to implement its plans to embed French into the curriculum. This should take due account of the needs of all children within a single class setting.
- The development of a progressive learning pathway for physical education (PE) is currently under development and its implementation identified within the school's strategic plan for next session. The school benefits from have a visiting PE specialist once every three weeks. Two PE sessions are provided during these visits. Children also receive a weekly lesson delivered by their class teacher. As a result of the model of delivery, children are not currently receiving the national minimum recommendation of two hours quality PE per week. We have asked the school to review this, ensuring that children are able to develop their skills in a progressive and coherent way.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners - Parental Engagement

- See choice QI

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- Wellbeing
- Fulfilment of statutory duties
- Inclusion and equality

- The size of the school ensures that all staff know the children and families very well. Relationships across the school are very good and, as a result, all children feel able to speak to an adult should they have a concern. Parents are confident that if they have a concern, the school will listen and take action promptly. There is a strong sense of community within the school.
- The school is at the early stages of introducing a new health and wellbeing planner, aimed at providing a coherent and progressive health and wellbeing curriculum. By closely monitoring the implementation of this new programme, including the assessment data arising from it the impact of this on their overall levels of attainment and achievement will be more effectively tracked and barriers to learning more easily identified.
- As a result of engaging all children with the wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included), children are able to assess themselves against each indicator using a ten-point scale and explain how these relate to their own experiences. This is providing a baseline against which the staff can measure progress in relation to children's self-assessment of their own health and wellbeing. The continued use of this approach will strengthen the monitoring of children's wellbeing over time.
- Transitions into school, and onward to secondary school, are very well supported, particularly for children with identified needs. Staff work hard to overcome potential barriers to supporting these transitions. For example, as a result of isolation due to the school's remote, rural location, enhanced transitions are in place for children transferring to Kirkwall Grammar (KGS). Children benefit from an extended range of visits designed to meet their specific needs. P7 children experience a week-long residential camp with P7's from other schools to help establish relationships prior to starting secondary education. The Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust provide financial support for this to ensure all children are able to attend.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no extra-curricular activities provided by the school. These are provided for periods of time across the school year, including cooking activities led by parents and sports club delivered by Active Schools. There are plans to introduce an after-school drama club in the near future.

- The school benefits from facilities such as a poly tunnel and raised beds, which enable children to learn how to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Designed as a community resource, there is scope to develop this further, involving the wider community. Greater use could be made of this to support whole school learning in relation to healthy eating and food technology. Consideration of this should be used to inform the continuing development of the school's curriculum rationale.

Fulfilment of statutory duties

- The school should continue to ensure that effective planning and support is in place to ensure that all children access their full entitlement to education.
- The school is not currently meeting its statutory requirements in respect of Religious observance.

Inclusion and equality

- Children and families benefit from funding provided by the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust. The provision of ferry tickets, significantly subsidised activities, and free swimming for children is removing the financial barriers placed on families as a result of living on an island. This is ensuring that children can be included in a wide range of cultural and sporting activities despite their remote location.
- The school has developed a more proactive approach to identifying and supporting children with additional support needs. This is enabling the earlier identification of potential barriers to learning.
- Increased opportunities to ensure children are knowledgeable about equalities and inclusion, should be developed through increased planned and progressive opportunities to explore diversity. Involving children in learning about their rights using the United Nations Conventions for the Rights of the Child will further strengthen this learning.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy
- Attainment over time
- Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Equity for all learners

Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy:

- Overall the majority of children have attained expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and English Language and numeracy and mathematics. The school predicts that less than half will achieve the appropriate Curriculum for Excellence level in both literacy and numeracy by the end of this school session. Evidence gathered as a result of a range of inspection activities confirms the accuracy of these predictions.
- The school tracks attainment individually and has a clear understanding of those with additional support needs, or those facing socio-economic barriers to learning. This tracking indicates that children facing barriers to learning are making limited progress. Interventions in place to support their learning is not yet having sufficient impact on closing the attainment gap between them and their peers. The school should strive to increase levels of attendance.

Attainment in literacy and English:

- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress on prior levels of attainment across all aspects of literacy and English.
- **Listening and talking:** Almost all children spoke confidently and articulately when engaging in a range of inspection activities. They were keen to share information about their school. Almost all listened attentively to the class teacher and responded appropriately when asked a question. Senior pupils have regular opportunities to present at school assemblies. All children have opportunities to present to a larger audience. For example, at termly open assemblies and the school show. During class activities there is a tendency for older children to speak on behalf of younger ones. It is important that staff ensure that all children have opportunities to develop the specific skills associated with effective listening and talking. More formal, structured tasks, through which children can develop these skills should be provided.
- **Reading:** All children are able to explain their reading preferences and talk about their favourite author. They understand the importance of the use of expression when reading aloud and a few children were able to demonstrate this. All children actively engaged in listening to the teacher read to them from a selected class novel. They could provide their ideas of what might happen next, as well as answering questions about the text. Some children had difficulty selecting a book appropriate to their reading ability from the class library. By developing children's skills in how to select a book appropriate to their reading ability, they will achieve more success when reading for enjoyment.

- **Writing:** Due to the significant use of worksheet materials, children have had limited experience of writing across a range of genres and at length. As a result, there is a need to develop the quality of the presentation of written work across all curricular areas. The development of correct letter formation within the younger year group should be addressed. Greater opportunities to write at length should now be provided, in addition to developing writing skills across a range of genres. Younger children are able to identify the key features of a poster and can explain some of the techniques used by the writer to convey important information. Senior pupils are benefitting from the challenge of writing the school newsletter and writing for relevant purposes such as this should continue to be encouraged.
- **Attainment in numeracy and mathematics:** Overall children are making satisfactory progress on prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics. Across the school there is a need to increase the pace of learning in numeracy and mathematics.
- **Number, money and measurement:** The younger children can recognise coins and notes and order them according to their value. Older children can round money to the nearest pound and identify the correct change from £10. They understand the purpose of receipts and can calculate the correct amount of change.
- **Shape, position and movement:** Across the school, children demonstrate an understanding of 2D and 3D objects. A few children can draw a net of a cuboid. Some children have difficulty using the correct vocabulary to describe shapes and their properties. Senior pupils could accurately identify acute, right and obtuse angles.
- **Information handling:** There is limited evidence of information handling in children's work. Through discussion with inspectors, children demonstrated a lack experience in collecting, organising and displaying data in a variety of ways. A few children were able to describe a bar graph. The school should review how the development of skills related to information handling can be strengthened. There is considerable scope to apply these skills, including the effective use of technology, in relevant contexts across a range of curricular areas.

Attainment over time in literacy and numeracy:

- Children are making satisfactory progress in their attainment in both literacy and numeracy over time. The school's tracks children's progress on an individual basis and has begun to look at this more strategically. The school has offered to pilot a new local authority tracking system next term which will enable staff to develop this further.
- Pupil Equity Funding has been used to provide a digital resource designed to improve spelling and reading. Although initially intended for targeted support, this is now being used on a daily basis by all children. Children spoke very positively about the impact this digital resource is having on their spelling and reading. For example, senior pupils felt that their reading fluency had improved. The school should continue to monitor the impact of this intervention on children's attainment, particularly in relation to its effectiveness in closing identified attainment gaps.
- As part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, the local authority is striving to raise attainment through the development of play-based approaches to learning and teaching within literacy and numeracy. Staff are embarking on a two year programme of

professional development to support this initiative, which forms a key priority within this year's improvement plan.

Achievement:

- All children contribute to the life of the school. Children's personal, social and community achievements are celebrated and shared through a photograph display at the main entrance. A 'star of the week' is celebrated in a special book which is on prominent display within the school's reception area. Monthly assemblies provide further opportunities to share achievements. Termly 'open assemblies' enable parents and the school community share the learning that has taken place and celebrate individual and wider achievements.
- The school's involvement in a range of environmental activities has resulted in children participating in the 'Big Schools Bird Watch' and environmental initiatives such as ECO-schools. There is scope to develop this further, including exploring opportunities for children to gain accreditation for this learning.

Equity for all learners:

- The school has systems in place to ensure equity of opportunity to children, such as those facing barriers to learning due to their socio-economic background.

School choice of QI : 2.7 Partnerships

- **The development and promotion of partnerships**
- **Collaborative learning and improvement**
- **Impact on learners**

- Overall, parents feel that they have opportunities throughout the year to engage with the work of the school. Termly 'open assemblies' provide them with an opportunity to hear about the learning that has taken place. Parents are actively involved in discussions about their child, for example, being invited to meetings to discuss their child's support plan. Children benefit from parent-led clubs and activities at points during the year. The school has identified the need to develop approaches to ensure greater parental involvement in school self-evaluation practices and school improvement initiatives. By implementing their plans to improve this aspect of the schools work, parents will be better placed to support their child's learning and the work of the school.
- The Parent Council supports the school through fundraising and through discussion about school improvement. By involving the Parent Council at an earlier stage of the self-evaluation process, the effectiveness of partnership working with parents will be increased. Joint, Orkney-wide meetings for headteachers and the chairperson of each Parent Council is beginning to develop a shared understanding of national and local priorities in addition to sharing ideas and experiences.
- Potential limitations arising from its rural location are overcome in a number of ways. For example, staff make very effective use of opportunities to work with colleagues from other schools, such as attending monthly 'Leaders of Learning' network meetings and professional learning events. This is enhancing professional development and is beginning to provide opportunities to participate in moderation activities to support the development of assessment practices. Plans are in place to support the specific needs of single-teacher schools through the introduction of regular 'Peedie School' cluster meetings next term.
- The significant financial support provided by the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust is supporting access for the children and their parents to cultural and sporting activities on the mainland. For example, through their provision of free ferry tickets.
- The school utilises a number of partnerships effectively to enhance children's learning, with a particular focus on their local environment and the uniqueness of setting. For example working in partnership with the RSPB, the school is helping develop and monitor the habitats of Corncrake on the Island of Egilsay. Participation on annual archaeological digs on the island of Rousay is deepening children's understanding of the history of where they live. This approach is enabling children to broaden their understanding of the world of work and develop skills in a real life context.
- As a result of effective partnership working, children are supported well as they transfer to secondary school. A shared residential experience is provided for the P7's, helping them to build new friendships prior to this transition. Parents spoke positively about the enhanced provision provided to support children during periods of transition, particularly for those with additional support needs.

Section Two

Summarised Inspection Findings

Rousay Community nursery class

Key contextual information

Rousay Community Nursery Class provides early learning and childcare (ELC) for children aged three to five years. Provision for children aged two to three years was introduced in August 2016. A morning session is provided. At the time of the inspection there were three children on the roll. The nursery class serves the islands of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change.

- The vision, values and aims of the school and early learning and childcare setting have recently been reviewed in partnership with practitioners, children and families. Strong professional values relevant to the setting and its community are in evidence in the caring, respectful and nurturing approach underpinning all aspects the work and life of the setting. This is having a positive impact on children and families. Parents have a high regard for the quality of the service and know that their views are welcomed and valued.
- A strong commitment to ongoing professional learning and development is evident in the setting. Professional learning networks developed by the local authority provide challenge and support to improve practice and support development. There are a number of clear examples of how this training and support has had a positive and sustained impact on practice with improved outcomes for children and families. The extended professional learning supporting the successful development of provision for children aged two to three years has led to the introduction of more responsive and creative approaches to planning for learning. As a result, children of all ages are motivated and enthusiastic about their experiences and are more able to initiate and successfully lead their learning.
- The reflective ethos of the setting is leading to improvements in children's experiences and to the learning environments of the setting. The re-design and enhancement of aspects of the outdoor learning space has led to children enjoying more scope to explore creativity. This includes the use of loose parts play and developing gross motor and balance skills through play with balance bikes. We discussed how the setting can continue to build on the good start being made in using a big book approach to embed the use of national guidance. This will support the setting to review practice and ensure that they use evidence gathered to take forward a manageable number of priority improvements. Practitioners recognise that there is scope to further involve children, parents and partners in gathering evidence, including evidence of children's progress and the impact of initiatives. This will ensure that

children and families benefit from a continuously improving service that meets their needs and reflects local and national guidance.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring.

- The welcoming and nurturing ethos of the setting contributes to positive relationships and a relaxed and purposeful learning environment. Children are actively involved in their learning through spontaneous play, planned learning opportunities and real-life experiences indoors and out. They are motivated in their play and show sustained interest in self-selected experiences with their peers. Children have scope to initiate and lead their own learning and contribute to shaping the day to day life of the setting through their choices. A few learning experiences need to be more challenging to extend children's interests and support them in developing their resilience and creativity skills. Children were observed to feel safe, very happy, confident and secure.
- A good and developing understanding of early learning pedagogy informs practice in the setting. The organisation and management of the playroom and outdoor spaces mean that children have ample time, space and freedom to follow their interests and to re-visit learning experiences. Interactions promote children's curiosity and support them to maintain focus well. Resources to support learning are readily accessible and children confidently find and select what they need to allow them to develop their play. Adult supported experiences should now be used to encourage learners to persevere when they encounter challenges in their learning.
- Planning approaches enable children to contribute their ideas. Next steps should see children developing their use of the language of learning and becoming more aware of the skills they are developing. This could be built into the routine of the setting to support children to understand their progress in learning and decide what they want to learn next. Involving children and parents in identifying developmentally appropriate targets for individuals will promote further parental engagement in recognising and supporting children's learning. This will help ensure that children's achievement at home and in the community are built upon in the setting.
- Practitioners know each child as an individual learner. Observations are used to document children's engagement in experiences across the curriculum and inform good judgements about children's progress. Children who require additional help with their learning are supported well through an individualised approach. This is having a positive impact on children's development and learning. We discussed how tracking and monitoring of learning should now be developed in line with practice in the school. This will help ensure that a clear picture of children's progress in key aspects of their learning contributes further to planning children's learning and development.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The setting promotes positive nurturing attachment for children. There is a focus on providing developmentally appropriate early learning experiences to enable children to progress in essential aspects of early learning. The setting is well resourced and provides attractive and accessible learning spaces for children indoors and out. Supportive interactions around story and song provide very good opportunities for children to develop their imagination and creativity alongside their peers. Children will benefit from improved opportunities to develop early numeracy and mathematics.
- Planning is responsive and based on the interests of the children. Practitioners support children to take forward and explore their own ideas and document these on a learning wall, in a few floor books and in individual learning journals. This should be further developed to ensure that parents and children are fully involved in identifying progress and that learning experiences build consistently on children's prior learning. Opportunities to make the very best use of home and island community experiences and resources should continue to be developed.
- Planning takes account of the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. An overview of how the curriculum is being covered would ensure breadth and balance of experiences for children.
- Thoughtful and flexible approaches help support effective transitions into the setting. As planned, the school should take forward plans to develop play based approaches to learning to ensure effective continuity and progression as children move to primary school.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families - parental engagement

- See choice QI.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- Wellbeing
- Fulfilment of statutory duties
- Inclusion and equality.

- The setting provides a welcoming and nurturing environment to children and families. Relationships of mutual trust and respect underpin all aspects of the work of the setting. Children are valued as unique individuals. Their individual personalities are acknowledged and valued in the school's 'peedie community'. As a result, children are secure and clearly enjoy their time in the setting.
- Practitioners have an understanding of the wellbeing indicators of Getting it Right for Every Child and work to ensure that children are safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving respected, responsible and included. Children are developing their own understanding of the wellbeing indicators through a range of play and well-planned experiences. These include preparing meals, travelling safely during learning visits in the community and the mainland and through daily outdoor learning. The setting should, as planned, further develop this work of exploring the indicators to support children in building appropriate vocabulary to talk about their feelings and to develop independence, resilience and positive approaches to challenges in their learning.
- Good role models and effective approaches are in place to promote positive behaviour. As a result, children are developing friendships and show increasing consideration of others. Overall, children cooperate very well in their play. This is helping to enrich the learning of all children. Children in the setting join primary children for lunch each week. They also enjoy positive experiences of interacting with the children in the primary during learning visits and learning outdoors.
- Practitioners understand the statutory duties and responsibilities in relation to the provision of early learning and childcare. Professional learning is used to guide practice in supporting children's care and wellbeing. Where appropriate, practitioners in the setting work with other agencies in their assessment and planning processes to ensure that children's needs are understood and met.
- All children are fully included in the setting. Practitioners should now promote children's awareness of equality issues and of the diversity that exists within the wider community.
- The extension of provision to include children aged two to three years means that the setting is better placed to provide effective early intervention. This is helping to secure progress for younger children.

3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- Progress in communication, early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing
- Children's progress over time
- Overall quality of children's achievement
- Ensuring equity for all children.

- Children's learning is supported through an effective balance of child- initiated and adult-supported learning. As a result, children are engaged and motivated in their play and making good progress in most aspects of their learning. The setting should now continue to build a picture of each child's progress over time through profiles and monitoring and tracking evidence to further improve outcomes for learners.
- Children are making good progress in early language skills through thoughtful one to one interaction, effective listening and sensitive support including, where appropriate, support extending beyond the setting. Practitioners successfully promote the enjoyment of stories and songs and rhyme. As a result, children are very engaged and enjoy selecting and sharing texts. Developmentally appropriate approaches are used to develop children's awareness of letters and initial sounds. Children are beginning to explore and use non-fiction texts, for example, using an instruction sheet to check the parts of a bicycle. Practitioners should continue to develop opportunities for children to deepen their understanding of written language and apply their skill in real life contexts. This could include, for example, when using recipes to make soup or by using simple graphic texts to assist in planning their day.
- Overall, children are developing appropriate numeracy skills as they play. They are developing some counting skills and recognise numbers in play contexts. Children are exploring mathematical concepts through different play opportunities and while completing puzzles and engaging in shared creative activities. They use some language of measure when playing with lentils and when measuring favourite toys. Practitioners reinforce and introduce appropriate mathematical language and promote children's engagement in counting, sorting and making simple patterns. The setting should now work to further identify and plan for the development of individual children's mathematics and numeracy skills that provide sufficient challenge.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They are making choices and learning to respect the choices of others. Children are learning about healthy eating through snack and lunch experiences and participation in preparing healthy food made with their own home grown ingredients. They are developing gross motor skills and balancing skills well through daily outdoor experiences. Children are developing good skills in caring for themselves. A few are able to talk about the how they can look after

their teeth and keep themselves healthy through hand washing. The setting should continue to extend children understanding of safety through involving them in assessing risk especially during outdoor play.

- A learning wall in the nursery celebrates the achievements of all children. More recently, the setting has been making use of an online platform to share children's achievements with parents and carers. It would be useful to link children's learning and achievements in nursery to the skills for learning life and work they are developing in the wider community.

Setting choice of QI 2.7: Partnerships

- **Engagement of parents in the life of the setting**
- **The promotion of partnerships**
- **Impact on children and families**

- Families feel very welcome in the setting. Practitioners work with parents and encourages and promotes a joint approach to children's learning and development. Parents understand and value the contribution of the setting to children's learning. They speak very highly of the caring, supportive and professional approach. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns about their children's development and learning and to share what works in supporting children's learning at home and in the setting. This is leading to improvements in outcomes for children.
- A range of opportunities including daily informal contact, stay and play sessions, book bags and transition visits increase family engagement in children's learning. Practitioners share information about children's learning daily and provide advice and support to parents to enable them to have confidence in contributing to children's development and learning through partnerships with a range of supportive agencies. The recent introduction of an online tool for sharing information about learning in the setting has been well received by parents who welcome the opportunity to learn more about what children are learning.
- Strongly supportive learning networks facilitate professional learning in the setting. This is leading to improved experiences and outcomes for children and families. We discussed how the setting can continue to build on the existing good range of partnerships within the local community to further enrich experiences through real life experiences and play. We also discussed how the setting can further develop family learning experiences where children and parents and grandparents can share their learning.

Care Inspectorate evidence

1 Quality of care and support

The nursery is a very supportive environment for the children and families on Rousay. Staff know the children and their families well and have built up trusting relationships. This nurturing approach has improved the confidence of children and parents. The school is aware of the importance of Getting it Right for Every Child and reflects on how they could support children by meeting the wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included).

The ideas and interests of the children are respected, with planning based on meeting the children's needs through engaging and building on their interests. The children are learning to take responsibility for themselves and for tasks in the nursery, such as watering plants and feeding the fish. The children respond well to the 'daily snack helper' role, and are all involved in tidy up routines. Children are learning to communicate and work together and respect the views and interests of others.

The nursery emphasises health and wellbeing, with healthy snacks to help children learn about healthy eating and daily opportunities for active play. When outside the nursery often join in playground games with the school children, who take a very caring approach to the younger ones and adjust their play to include them. Children are helped to recognise and name emotions as they arise, and through this to build up resilience and cope with disappointment and setbacks.

The importance of times of transition is recognised and home visits are offered along with meetings at community events, so children can become familiar with staff. Nursery visits are arranged prior to children starting and parents are encouraged to stay. At nursery, children are able to meet the school children and staff and enjoy the weekly shared lunch, which helps the move to primary one.

The children's development is tracked through learning journey folders, which are regularly updated with photographs, observations and learning stories, as well as examples of the children's work. The folders should also include All About Me sheets to capture the children's likes, dislikes and interests when they start at nursery. Updating these with parents also helps to highlight children's achievements and interests from home. Parents are very positive about the communication they have with the nursery, including sharing folders and the instant photo messaging app.

Care Inspectorate grade: very good

2 Quality of environment

The nursery room is bright, attractive and welcoming with displays celebrating children's work and achievements. The layout gives room for playing in groups or alone and the children move freely between activities. They are confident in making choices and accessing resources, which are changed in response to children's interests and opportunities for extending learning. The train track and cars, messy play, writing, role play and the book corner were all made use of during the session.

The nursery is safe and clean with a high level of supervision. Children are encouraged to develop independence and staff and children have conversations about keeping themselves safe, both in nursery and at home. To help children learn about safety, risk benefit assessments should be further developed with the children. Identifying and discussing potential hazards in the nursery and the community helps children's independence and increases responsibility for their own safety.

In addition to the school hall, the nursery benefit from outside spaces including the school playground, the activity area with large play equipment and scrap store, a poly tunnel for growing and woods. An area near the nursery entrance has been developed to include a large sand/digging corner with kitchen, as well as child accessible storage for wheeled vehicles and equipment for exploring the curriculum outside. Opportunities for building on literacy and numeracy in the environment should be developed to help children see themselves as learners, both indoors and out. Discussion with children and parents about what children are learning outside could be reinforced and recorded using floor books and the learning journals to review learning and identify next steps. The nursery has made use of wider community resources with visits to woods and trips on the ferry to visit Firth School for Chatter Matters. The nursery improvement plan has identified the benefit of increasing links with the community and extending the range of visits out of the nursery, as well as encouraging visitors to share their knowledge and experience with the children.

Care Inspectorate grade: very good

3 Quality of staffing

The nursery has appropriately qualified early years practitioners, registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. In response to the introduction of two year olds last year, a wide range of additional training was undertaken to meet their needs. For example, 'Learning Language and Loving It', a course with practical sessions including videoing of participants to allow discussion and enhance practice, as well as academic input.

The support of the early years team, as well as nursery cluster group meetings and visits to other nursery settings, has contributed to the practice within the nursery. Staff are keen to adapt their practice in line with new guidance and the needs of the children attending the nursery. Staff reflect on practice regularly and identify additional training which would be of benefit to children and families such as Solihull training, where the importance of being able to work with families is recognised, rather than seeing children in isolation.

There is an annual appraisal system in place, and areas for development are identified and discussed at the annual professional review with the headteacher. Despite the difficulties of transport from a small island, any training provided by the early years team is attended when this was felt to benefit the children.

Care Inspectorate grade: very good

4 Quality of management and leadership

The headteacher was on leave at the time of the inspection but there has been regular informal contact between staff. They discussed the needs of the children and ways of meeting these, either in the nursery or by accessing multi-agency services on Orkney mainland. The school has recently reduced to one class, and opportunities for working together with the early levels in the school, and for formal monitoring visits and feedback has been reduced. However, members of the early years team have made regular visits to observe, feedback and share good practice ideas. An experienced early years practitioner had spent time in the nursery supporting changes and improvements to the outdoor area, to increase the engagement of the children and the learning which was fostered outside.

There is a school improvement plan and self-evaluation process, including opportunities for contributions from the Parent Council. The nursery encouraged formal and informal feedback from parents over the year, including daily discussions, parents' open days and comments in the learning folders. Areas which have been identified for the nursery are a greater focus on learning in observations and recording and sharing this with children and parents, as well as further involvement with the community. As there are no longer younger children on the islands to link with, practitioners should look to widen community involvement by inviting parents and grandparents to nursery events, as well as family friends and neighbours. These links would help to include children and build their confidence as part of their community.

The process of self-evaluation against the quality indicators in How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare Centre has been started with assistance from the headteacher and the early years team. Feedback from children and parents was sought and used as evidence in this process and the acting headteacher is planning to take this process forward as part of the school quality assurance programme.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

To be completed by the Care Inspector and inserted into the letter

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no recommendations.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91% – 99%
Most	75% – 90%
Majority	50% – 74%
Minority/Less than half	15 – 49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

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