

5 November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In June 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Brae High School and Nursery. 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, who leads across the nursery and school with integrity, has a clear sense of direction. He is creating a culture of leadership and of high expectations.
- In the nursery, practitioners have created a calm, inclusive learning environment. There are warm, respectful relationships across the setting.
- Staff in the nursery lead the development of learning zones in the playroom and outdoors effectively. This is helping children to learn and play in well-resourced environments in activities which match their needs and interests well. Children are making good progress in their learning and development.
- Children and young people are proud of their school. They benefit from strong, supportive relationships with each other and with staff. Children and young people make good progress in literacy across the primary and secondary departments.

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

- Senior leaders need to improve approaches to evaluating the work of the school. Senior and middle leaders should use this information more effectively to help them identify key priorities for school improvement.
- Middle leaders need to continue to develop their collective responsibility to lead change and plan for improvement. They need to recognise and demonstrate their whole school responsibilities more effectively.
- In the nursery, senior leaders need to continue to develop methods of gathering evidence on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in order to embed fully these approaches.
- In the school, teachers need to provide appropriate tasks and activities set at the right level for all children and young people to help them make better progress in their learning. This includes providing more high-quality learning experiences and teachers adapting learning activities as required to meet the needs of all children and young people.
- Teachers should continue to develop programmes and courses that build on prior learning more effectively.

- In the school, staff need to have higher expectations of what children and young people can attain and achieve in order to raise attainment and achievement.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#). 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 Education Scotland's evaluations for Brae High School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the school	Evaluation
Leadership of change	satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	weak
Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Leadership of change	good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Securing children's progress	good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Brae High School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Shetland Islands Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Shetland Islands Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Frances E. Graham
HM Inspector