

25 June 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Small Isles Primary School and Nursery Class. 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 clear leadership and direction provided by the headteacher which has resulted in a school and nursery where children are making good progress in their learning. Significant action had been taken since August to improve a few key areas of the school and as a result, children's attainment has increased.
- Children who are respectful, well behaved and enjoy their learning in school. As a result, the school has a warm welcoming atmosphere where children are relaxed in their learning within beautiful surroundings.
- There is a strong sense of community where parents and the community support the learning within the school and nursery well.

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

- Continue to raise attainment and challenge more able learners through increasing more open-ended exploratory learning.
- Continue to strengthen the curriculum to ensure children receive a broad balanced curriculum appropriate to their age and stage. In doing this, strengthen the approach to developing the health and wellbeing curriculum across the school and nursery. Staff should continue to develop ways of using the unique context of the school as a key learning resource.
- Further develop staff opportunities to lead areas of school improvement which provide scope to increase the pace of change.

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 Small Isles Primary School and Nursery Class

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

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for the nursery class

Care Inspectorate standards	Grade
Quality of care and support	good
Quality of environment	adequate

Requirements/recommendations made by Care Inspectorate for the nursery class

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 one recommendation.

Recommendations

- 1. The pace and the balance of the day should be reviewed in order to meet children's individual needs and promote positive learning outcomes. The headteacher and staff should continue to review the environment, both inside and outside, to ensure they provide a dynamic, fun, stimulating and enabling environment. Children should be given the time and space to develop their ideas, flourish and be creative.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

- 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling' (HSCS 1.30);
- 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials.' (HSCS 1.31); and
- 'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment.' (HSCS 1.30).

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/argyll-and-bute/8108528>

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Argyll and Bute Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Sadie Cushley
HM Inspector

Jane MacLeod
Care Inspector