

17 June 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2025, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Dounby Community School. 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.

- Children are expressive, enthusiastic and articulate. They are curious and eager in their learning. Children are very proud of their school and its history.
- The headteacher and staff work well together as a team. They foster positive nurturing relationships with children and create an inclusive, attractive learning environment.
- Staff work effectively with a wide range of partners to support children's learning and achievement. This is helping children to develop important skills and extend their knowledge.
- Senior leaders and staff have effective approaches in place to identify and assist children who require additional support with their learning and wellbeing.

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

- The headteacher and staff should continue their work to review and develop further approaches to high-quality learning and teaching across the school. This should include assessing and monitoring children's learning and progress more regularly and with increased rigour.
- Staff should now work to ensure that all children experience learning across the broad general education that links well with the school's local context. They should ensure that all planning and assessment enables children to build on their skills and knowledge progressively over time.
- The headteacher and staff should develop further approaches to raise attainment and accelerate children's progress in literacy and numeracy across the school. Clear targets should be set that can be measured. This will help staff to check that any changes are leading to improvements in children's outcomes.

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 Dounby Community School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### 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. Orkney Islands Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Lisa Marie McDonnell  
HM Inspector