

**Integrated Inspection by the  
Care Commission and  
HM Inspectorate of Education of  
Heathrigg Nursery School  
Falkirk Council**

**21 January 2004**

The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act, 2001, requires that the Care Commission inspect all care services covered by the Act every year to monitor the quality of care provided. In accordance with the Act, the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education carry out integrated inspections of the quality of care and education. In doing this, inspection teams take account of *National Care Standards, Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16*, and *The Child at the Centre*. The following standards and related quality indicators were used in the recent inspection.

<b>National Care Standard</b>	<b>Child at the Centre Quality Indicator</b>
Standard 2 – A Safe Environment	Resources
Standard 4 – Engaging with Children	Development and learning through play
Standard 5 – Quality of Experience	Curriculum Children’s development and learning
Standard 6 – Support and Development	Support for children and families
Standard 14 – Well-managed Service	Management, Leadership and Quality Assurance

Evaluations made using HMIE quality indicators use the following scale, and these words are used in the report to describe the team’s judgements:

- Very good : major strengths
- Good : strengths outweigh weaknesses
- Fair : some important weaknesses
- Unsatisfactory : major weaknesses

Reports contain Recommendations which are intended to support improvements in the quality of service.

Any Requirements refer to actions which must be taken by service providers to ensure that regulations are met and there is compliance with relevant legislation. In these cases the regulation(s) to which requirements refer will be noted clearly and timescales given.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

Copies of this report have been sent to the head of service, staff and the Director of Education. Copies are also available on the Care Commission website: [www.carecommission.com](http://www.carecommission.com) and HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

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Complaints Co-ordinator  
Headquarters  
Care Commission  
Compass House  
Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

Hazel Dewart  
HM Inspectorate of Education  
Saughton House  
Broomhouse Drive  
EDINBURGH  
EH11 3XD

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# **Integrated Inspection by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education of Heathrigg Nursery School Falkirk Council**

## **Introduction**

Heathrigg nursery school was inspected in September 2003 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. The nursery catered for children from age three to five. At the time of the inspection the roll was 34.

## **The environment**

The nursery was based in a single storey building. It provided a safe, attractive and stimulating environment. The accommodation was clean and well maintained. Staff planned activities well to cope with restrictions to some areas due to lack of space. Children were able to play independently and participate in small group activities. Staff gave careful attention to health and safety matters. Play equipment was clean and in good condition with risk assessments carried out in each area. There was a safe and very stimulating outdoor area at the rear of the nursery. Recent building work had allowed the nursery to plan for provision for children under three years of age.

## **Quality of children's experience**

Staff had developed very good relationships with children. They interacted very well with them in their play activities to extend and ensure a good pace of learning. They organised activities and resources very effectively to meet children's needs. The nursery had good arrangements for planning a broad and balanced programme of activities. Staff assessed children's progress regularly to meet their needs and provided written reports to parents. Information was shared with other agencies, where appropriate, and transferred to local primary schools.

The nursery provided a very good range of experiences which children took part in enthusiastically.

- Staff supported children very well in emotional, personal and social development. Children were encouraged to be independent and to show consideration for others. Most children had settled well into the nursery and had an understanding of the daily routines. They were developing good social skills and showed a good awareness of simple rules and hygiene practices.
- In communication and language, the programme was very good. Staff provided a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen and enjoy books in different contexts. Some children were developing good skills in listening carefully to

stories and instructions and talking in small groups. They were beginning to understand the meaning of pictures and print in books and were developing early writing skills.

- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Staff organised a range of interesting visitors to help children develop their awareness of their local environment. They encouraged the development of children's curiosity using a very good range of natural materials. Children enjoyed investigating and playing with water, sand, soil and wood. Staff and children were creating a very interesting sensory garden outside. Children were developing early mathematical skills in number and shape.
- In expressive and aesthetic development, the programme was very good. Staff provided a range of stimulating opportunities for children to express themselves through art and craft activities. Children enjoyed singing songs and rhymes and had opportunities to play musical instruments and participate in role-play.
- Staff provided a very good programme for physical development and movement. They organised very good activities for daily energetic play indoors and outside. Children were developing good hand control using a variety of tools and equipment. Most children were becoming confident in climbing, sliding, balancing and running. Staff needed to review the location of the indoor climbing frame to make it safer.

## **Support for children and families**

Staff knew children very well and provided effective support for them and their families. They responded appropriately and sensitively to children's individual circumstances. Strong staff teamwork was a major factor in the quality of support for children. Staff received good support from the headteacher. They had developed very effective links with a range of agencies within the local community to support and develop children's learning. Staff had a good understanding of procedures for supporting children with special educational needs.

Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with the work of the nursery. They had regular opportunities to talk informally with staff who responded positively to concerns raised. Staff had established a popular scheme to lend books, a camera and a teddy called "Adventure Ted" for parents and children to use at home. Opportunities were provided for parents to become more actively involved in the work of the nursery, but to-date, these were not well attended. The nursery had plans to develop this further.

## Management

The headteacher provided very effective leadership. She had a clear vision for the nursery's future development which she shared effectively with staff and parents. She was strongly committed to the nursery and provided strong direction and guidance for staff.

She had prepared sound curriculum and administrative policies and had identified areas to be developed further. Sound procedures were in place for monitoring and evaluating the service. Staff were regularly consulted about the work of the nursery. The development plan identified appropriate priorities and was based on thorough evaluation.

The nursery was staffed in line with national standards. Opportunities for staff to undertake continuing professional development were provided.

## Key strengths

- Interaction between staff and children was very good.
- The very good range of opportunities provided by staff in the key aspects of children's development and learning.
- The very positive links between the nursery and other agencies in the community.
- The very effective leadership of the headteacher.

## Recommendations for improvement

- The nursery should review the location of the indoor climbing frame.
- The headteacher and staff should continue as planned, to encourage parents to be more actively involved in the work of the nursery.
- Staff should continue to implement the priorities outlined in their development plan.

Care Commission Officers and HM Inspectors have asked the pre-school centre and Education Authority to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report. Where requirements are made, the action plan should include timescales to deal with these. The plan will be available to parents and carers. In liaison with the pre-school centre and Education Authority, Care Commission Officers and HM Inspectors will monitor progress to ensure improvements are in line with the main findings of the report.

Lynne Nimmo  
Care Commission

Sheena McGhee  
HM Inspectorate of Education