

**Abbey Day Nursery  
Paisley  
Renfrewshire  
10 December 2008**

This report tells you about the quality of education at the centre. We describe how children benefit from learning there. We explain how well they are doing and how good the centre is at helping them to learn. Then we look at the ways in which the centre does this. We describe how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including parents<sup>1</sup> and services which support children. We also comment on how well staff and children work together and how they go about improving the centre.

Our report describes the 'ethos' of the centre. By 'ethos' we mean the relationships in the centre, how well children are cared for and treated and how much is expected of them in all aspects of centre life. Finally, we comment on the centre's aims. In particular, we focus on how well the aims help staff to deliver high quality learning, and the impact of leadership on the centre's success in achieving these aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). Where applicable, the website contains analyses of questionnaire returns and descriptions of good practice in the centre.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

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### **1. The centre**

Abbey Day Nursery was inspected by HMIE as part of the integrated inspection programme on behalf of both HMIE and the Care Commission in October 2008. The centre caters for pre-school children aged under one to five years. It is registered for 80 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 112.

## **2. Particular strengths of the centre**

- Relationships between children, parents and staff.
- The caring and supportive learning environment.
- Staff teamwork and their commitment to continuing professional development.
- Commitment of the manager and staff to improving the quality of children's learning.

## **3. How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **Learning and achievement**

Children under three are happy and settled in nursery. Staff know individual children well and are caring and sensitive to their needs. Babies' care routines established at home are followed in nursery. A daily sheet is available to parents of younger children to let them know how their child has been at nursery and activities they have enjoyed. Staff settle children in according to their needs and parents are able to stay in the playroom or in the parents' room. Staff provide opportunities for children to explore using all their senses and they enjoy touching a range of natural materials. Babies and toddlers enjoy one another's company and are learning to communicate in different ways. They like looking at themselves and each other in mirrors and babble to one another when playing. There is scope to make the environment for children aged under two more cosy and homely.

Children aged three to five are making good progress in nearly all aspects of their development and learning. They enjoy listening to stories and are able to identify the title and author of their favourite books. Some children use the book area independently to read stories

and find information. During circle and group time, children talk confidently to staff and each other and are able to share their news. During pretend play in the 'Abbey Hair Salon', children act out roles and take appointments on the phone and write them in a diary. They handle money and count out change for customers. Whilst out in the local park for a nature walk, children describe the changes in the weather and are aware of the different seasons. Most children can recognise their name in print and a few can write it. They need more experiences to play at being writers in all areas of the playroom. Most children are becoming confident at counting and recognising numbers. A few are able to make comparisons and use mathematical language to describe the size and shape of objects when sorting and matching. Some children use the computer well, and the smartboard is popular with children who use it to create pictures and solve simple problems. A few children are developing curiosity, for example when working with magnets and metal detectors. They are able to explain that objects need to be made of metal to be picked up. Children are able to express their creativity in paintings and collage and make models using dough and clay. Children enjoy singing their favourite songs and move rhythmically to music. Most children are good at controlling their hand and fingers when using writing tools, scissors and paintbrushes.

## **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

The learning opportunities for children are good across the curriculum. In the baby and toddler rooms, staff are developing their use of the Birth to Three Guidance to provide a range of suitable play activities for very young children. The curriculum for children age three to five covers the key areas of children's development and learning. It allows children to make good progress in their learning. Staff are beginning to think about *Curriculum for Excellence* and how they can plan to take more account of children's interests and ideas. Staff know children well and are actively involved with them when they are playing. Children are developing their independence and contribute their ideas to the "Learning Tree". They can be relied on to perform personal tasks such as washing their hands and brushing their teeth. They respond to most of the activities with enthusiasm and interest.

Children are able to explore and investigate when playing with water and sand. Opportunities for pretend play encourage children to cooperate with one another and use new words to express themselves. Staff are continuing to develop aspects of the curriculum such as mathematics in all areas of children's play. Children are learning about different foods that keep them healthy and they enjoy trying different dishes at lunchtime. Children need to have more regular energetic physical play experiences, particularly when obliged to be indoors on account of the weather. Children are good at deciding what they want to do and are able to play on their own or join in with other children. Staff encourage children's confidence and responsibility by inviting them to complete tasks around the nursery. Most concentrate well on their chosen activity and are well supported by staff to learn to share and take turns. Staff are good at asking children about their opinions and interests. However, their questioning and discussions were not always effective enough to extend and challenge children's thinking.

Staff are very caring and supportive of all children. They respond sensitively to children's individual learning needs, interests and personal circumstances. Staff are beginning to involve children in planning play activities. Their skills in observing and assessing children's learning are developing but they do not always identify clearly enough what they expect children to learn next.

#### **4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?**

Parents are made to feel welcome in the nursery and are able to speak with staff daily. Overall, parents' comments about the nursery are positive but a few would like more information about their children's progress. The nursery newsletter is very attractive and informative and includes photographs of children engaged in activities. The parents' room has a good range of information for parents about the nursery and local services. The nursery works well with other agencies to support children when required. The transition from home

to nursery and within nursery is supported by 'All About Me' sheets and children's profiles. Staff prepare a transition record for pre-school children, and teachers from local schools have visited the nursery to meet the children and staff. Staff place a high priority on children's care and wellbeing at all stages within the nursery.

## **5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?**

The positive ethos of the nursery is shared by everyone who is involved with it. Staff are committed to continually improving the quality of children's experiences and progress in their learning. Staff contribute their ideas about how the nursery can continue to improve. The nursery manager works with the staff team to make changes that will improve the nursery. The manager recognises that they need to develop ways to regularly monitor and evaluate children's experiences. They are aware that they need to involve children and parents more in this process. Staff work very well as a team and share their ideas to support improvement and change. Room supervisors accept responsibility for leading developments. Management now have to involve all staff in taking forward some aspects of key improvements within the improvement plan.

## **6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?**

Staff look after children very well and have high expectations of children's learning and behaviour. Children are treated fairly and with respect. Nearly all children are well behaved and respect one another. Staff praise children for their efforts and achievements and encourage them to include examples of their work in their profiles and to contribute to displays around the nursery. Children celebrate a variety of festivals and are encouraged to recognise and celebrate different cultures. They have started to recycle and save energy and develop their understanding of how to protect the environment. The nursery is well placed to continue to develop its approaches to health promotion

and sustainability. All staff are knowledgeable about the child protection procedures used in the nursery.

## **7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?**

The manager knows the nursery, children and parents well and has set out what needs to be improved within the improvement plan. She is well supported by an enthusiastic and hardworking staff who are committed to continuous improvement. The nursery needs to develop more systematic procedures for identifying its strengths and areas for improvement. It needs to take more account of *Curriculum for Excellence* when planning improvements. Working in partnership with the local authority, the nursery is well placed to improve further.

## **8. What happens next?**

We are confident that the centre will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, we will make no more visits following this inspection. The centre and the education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress in improving the quality of education.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- Staff working with children under two should review the layout of the rooms to make them more cosy and homely.
- Staff should ensure all children are appropriately challenged in their learning.
- Staff should progress *Curriculum for Excellence*.
- The manager and staff should further develop systems for self-evaluation.

Quality indicators help centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a centre. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish centres are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Abbey Day Nursery.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Children's experiences</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>good</b>

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>

**Managing Inspector:** Hilary Long  
10 December 2008

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This report uses the following word scale to make clear judgements made by inspectors.

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses