

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Allan's Primary School Nursery Class
Stirling Council**

15 June 2005

**Allan's Primary School Nursery Class
29 Spittal Street
Stirling
FK8 1DU**

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.

National Care Standard	Child at the Centre Quality Indicator
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 headteacher, staff and the education authority. Copies are also available on the Care Commission website: www.carecommission.com and HMIE website: www.hmie.gov.uk.

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of the inspection or about this report you should write either to the Care Commission or to HM Inspectorate of Education at the address below. If you are still dissatisfied with our services, you can contact your member of the Scottish Parliament (or, if you prefer, any other MSP). You can also contact the Scottish Parliamentary Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and Agencies.

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Integrated Inspection by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education of Allan's Primary School Nursery Class Stirling Council

Introduction

Allan's Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in March 2005 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. The nursery catered for pre-school children aged three to five years. At the time of the inspection the roll was 21.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery class was located in a purpose-built extension within the main primary school building. There was a separate, secure entrance providing direct access. The accommodation was bright and welcoming with attractive displays of children's work. The environment was clean and well maintained with appropriate safety routines operating. The nursery was well resourced and equipment and toys were routinely maintained. An infection control policy was in place.

There were appropriate and varied activities offering children opportunities to work together or individually.

Effective use was made of the outside area to support learning across the curriculum. The outside area had been developed to provide opportunities to grow plants in a container.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had developed a welcoming atmosphere and very good relationships with children. They made good use of encouragement and praise to support them. The teacher skilfully used questions and interactions to extend and support children's learning. A good range of activities and resources was provided for children that met their needs and experiences. The teacher demonstrated a very sound understanding of children's development and play. There was a good balance between structured activities and free play. Early numeracy and literacy were set firmly in the context of play.

Short-term planning related to the five key areas of the curriculum. Staff needed to ensure that plans focused more on what children were expected to learn. Observations were carried out regularly and used to inform next steps in learning for individual children. The local authority's "Starting Points" profile provided parents with a working document showing each child's progress and development. Parents regularly viewed this information along with their child's folder of work. This information was shared with the primary school at transition time.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children were observed to be happy, safe and secure. Staff had provided children with opportunities to use pictorial planners for planning their day when they arrived in nursery. They knew the nursery routines but a few children exhibited challenging behaviour and needed help to be more aware of the needs of others. Children were becoming independent and were taking responsibility for personal hygiene and personal tasks. Some children were developing friendships and were aware of the needs and feelings of others. Some children needed more support to persevere with tasks and challenge in their learning. Children helped with snack preparation but needed to be given more purposeful tasks to do. The self-service system was used well. Children needed to be encouraged to tidy around the nursery when they were finished with an activity so that it remained an exciting opportunity for other children to use.
- The programme for communication and language was good. The teacher encouraged children to talk about their experiences and ideas during their play, group times and social activities. Most children paid attention to information and instructions from adults. They took part in short and extended conversations and confidently used language for a variety of purposes including questioning, describing and sequencing ideas and stories. Children enjoyed listening to stories. Books were used on displays around the nursery and in the attractive book corner but a greater variety should be offered to the children. The teacher encouraged children to develop a good early understanding of the language and layout of books. Children recognised their own names in print. The writing table gave children opportunity to scribble, make marks and write using a variety of tools, coloured papers and shaped cards. Staff had provided the children with the opportunity to visit the local library and have the librarian read to the children.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Staff had provided a range of activities and resources to encourage children to find out about science, technology, mathematics and numeracy. Children were interested in finding out about how things work. They were investigating with scoops and clamps in sand play. The outside area was used to develop children's sense of wonder about the world as they planted bulbs, watched them grow and anticipated what they would look like. They were finding out about weather changes. Staff provided children with opportunities to learn about the care of pets in the pet shop in the nursery. Staff made very good use of visitors into the nursery and visits out to help children understand and learn about the local environment. Children were developing an early understanding of mathematical processes such as matching, counting, measuring and grouping.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Children experimented with a variety of art and craft techniques including printing, painting and modelling. They expressed feelings and thoughts through

these media. They used role-play to recreate real-life situations. Children used a variety of construction toys to make models for use in dramatic play. There was evidence of children using computer programmes to paint and draw effectively. Children made shakers to be used as percussion instruments and enjoyed making and listening to music. They knew a good range of traditional and modern songs, rhymes and singing games. Staff provided opportunities for children to dance and move freely to music.

- The programme for physical development and movement was very good. Children were developing finger and hand control through using a variety of tools including construction toys, brushes, scissors and writing utensils. The outside area was used daily and provided a very good opportunity for children to run, skip, throw and catch with increasing confidence. They used large sit-and-ride toys with confidence. Children were developing an awareness of space and of the importance of health and fitness. Staff provided the opportunity for children to use the school gym to develop their confidence and skills on large apparatus including climbing, sliding and balancing. They were learning about cooperating with one another in physical games and play.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had developed very good relationships with parents and families. They responded to individual needs and circumstances. The teacher knew the children well and made very effective use of assessment information to identify any needs. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were mostly very pleased with the service provided. A few raised concerns about greater challenge for the more able children. Staff provided a wide range of information for parents about the work of the nursery and children's development. Parents had been involved in the development of the newly opened parents' room which gave parents a meeting place for formal and informal meetings. Information relating to the service, including planning for the nursery, was clearly displayed and available for parents. Parents were welcomed into the nursery to help with outings and to offer their own skills. Story-sack lending fostered a useful link between the nursery and children's homes.

Transition arrangements for children moving into primary one were in place. The nursery hosted sessions to welcome parents to the school to discuss the service and curriculum planning.

There were no children with additional support needs at the time of the inspection. Staff were knowledgeable about identifying additional needs and supporting children appropriately.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher demonstrated very good leadership and effective management. A robust system of monitoring and evaluating the overall provision had been implemented. The headteacher had a very good knowledge of individual children and their families.

Policies and procedures had been developed in line with national standards and were accessible to parents and carers. Staff implemented the child protection policy and procedures.

The headteacher was aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the implications of registration for staff.

Key strengths

- The very supportive and effective leadership provided by the headteacher.
- The highly skilled and dedicated nursery teacher.
- The very good programmes across three curricular areas as highlighted in the report.
- The very positive working partnership between staff and parents.
- The very effective system for recording children's progress and development to be shared with parents.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

All recommendations made at the previous inspection had been met.

Recommendations for improvement

- Headteacher and staff should extend the planning process to further reflect key learning outcomes.
- Some staff should develop opportunities for some children to be challenged in their learning and supported to persevere when tasks present as difficult.
- Some staff should ensure more consistency in the use of questioning, dialogue and interactions to support and extend children's learning.

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.

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Care Commission

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