

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Arisaig Primary School Nursery Class
The Highland Council**

1 March 2006

Arisaig Primary School Nursery Class
Arisaig
Inverness-shire
PH39 4NH

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

If you would like an additional copy of this report

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.

If you wish to comment about integrated pre-school inspections

Should you wish to comment on any aspect of integrated pre-school inspections, you should write in the first instance to Kenneth Muir, HMCI, at HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Our complaints procedure

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to either:

Complaints Coordinator	Hazel Dewart
Headquarters	HM Inspectorate of Education
Care Commission	Denholm House
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Riverside Drive	Almondvale Way
Dundee	Livingston
DD1 4NY	EH54 6GA

If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You can write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, 4-6 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NS. You can also telephone 0870 011 5378 or e-mail enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.scottishombudsman.org.uk.

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Introduction

Arisaig Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in November 2005 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. HMIE carried out this inspection on behalf of both organisations and consulted the Care Commission about its findings. The nursery catered for pre-school children aged three to five years. It was registered for 20 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 17.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery was located in the general purpose room of the primary school. Equipment had to be set up and cleared away every day. Staff had worked hard to provide a bright, welcoming environment using photographs of children at play and displays of children's art work. The nursery had its own entrance. However, it did not yet meet with statutory regulations and should be improved. Nursery children shared the use of the toilets with the primary school and had to be escorted by a member of staff.

The room was divided into areas where the children could play independently or as part of a larger group. Staff needed to review the layout and allocation of space and resources within the room to ensure that children could access a full range of activities. Staff had provided portable sinks to allow children to wash their hands in the playroom. The outside play area was part of the school grounds and could not be accessed independently. Staff had been trained in first aid, carried out risk assessments for outings and ensured equipment was well maintained.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had created a warm and caring learning environment. They made good use of praise to encourage and develop children's self esteem. They had very good relationships with children, who responded well to them. There was a good balance between activities children could choose for themselves and those led by an adult. Children were given a wide range of resources to choose from but these were not always appropriate to their needs.

Staff had begun to develop a suitable planning system, supported by the recently-appointed nursery teacher. Plans stated clearly what children were expected to learn. Staff held weekly planning meetings to discuss and evaluate their observations of children. They recorded this information and used it to inform next steps in learning. Folders containing dated samples of children's work

were kept to identify progress and inform reports to parents and the P1 teacher. Folders were not sufficiently accessible to children and parents throughout the session.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children were confident and settled in the nursery. They were friendly and polite to staff and children. Children were making simple friendships and were learning to take turns through playing simple games. They understood the importance of washing hands. Children were encouraged to make their own choices on a monthly “Dress Yourself Day”, where parents were asked to let their child choose what to wear. Staff did not offer sufficient opportunities for children to develop their independence.
- The programme for communication and language was good. Children talked confidently to adults and to each other throughout the session. They used language well in role-play situations and listened attentively to instructions. Most children listened well at story time and were keen to predict what might happen next. Children did not access the book corner independently. Staff should review the layout of this area to promote children’s interest and enjoyment of books. Staff had provided good opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills by making marks and drawing. A few children were writing letter formations and most could recognise their own name in print.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children were familiar with their local environment through walks to the village and the beach. This helped them develop an appreciation of their area and an understanding of the changing of the seasons. They had opportunities to learn about other cultures throughout the year. Staff encouraged children to develop their knowledge of early number through displays, counting and games. Most children knew shapes and early numbers. However, they did not have enough opportunities to explore and investigate. Children were developing good skills in using the nursery computer. However, opportunities to develop skills in other aspects of information and communications technology (ICT) were more limited.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was fair. Children were very involved in role-play in the area set up as a post office. They had opportunities to express themselves in imaginative play. Staff had provided opportunities for children to access free painting and sponge printing. Children also made good use of the drawing area to produce pictures and then tell the story about their drawing. Staff did not, however, offer children any opportunities for modelling using either play dough or junk material. There were examples of children’s collage pictures on the walls. Children were able to sing, use percussion and move to music on a weekly basis with a music teacher. Children did not have enough access to musical instruments on a regular basis.
- The programme for physical development and movement was fair. Children had many opportunities to develop control of their fingers and hands through the use of pencils, brushes,

scissors, small construction toys and jigsaws. Children did not have regular opportunities for energetic outdoor play. There was no direct access to the outside area and its surface made it difficult for children to experience challenging play. Children used wheeled toys but were limited by the space available. Staff did not ensure children had sufficient opportunities to develop their confidence and skill on large apparatus.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff provided good support for children and families. Parents were kept informed of the work of the nursery through daily diaries, informal discussions, parents' notice board, newsletters and workshops. Courses on managing children's behaviour were made available to parents. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and those spoken with on the day of inspection, were very satisfied with almost all aspects of the nursery. Staff were aware of the need to review their nursery handbook.

All staff understood how to identify and support children who needed additional help. There was a suitable programme of induction in place to support children when they moved from nursery to P1. Nursery children had regular opportunities to visit the adjacent primary classroom and the P1 teacher spent time in the nursery. Staff shared information on children's progress with parents and the P1 teacher using the local authority transition record.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher provided effective leadership and was committed to the ongoing development of the nursery. He was approachable, supportive and had developed very good relationships with parents, staff and children. Parents were encouraged to make a full contribution to the life of the school and many did. Staff worked well together and were hardworking and enthusiastic.

A development plan was in place for the whole school which included the nursery. The headteacher led the process of self-evaluation in the primary school and now needed to make more use of self-evaluation to identify nursery priorities for improvement. He had recently introduced a range of formal and informal monitoring procedures to review the work of the nursery and provide support for the newly-appointed nursery coordinator teacher. He provided written feedback on staff planning and on formal monitoring of nursery practice.

A range of policies was in place to assist staff and these were reviewed on a regular basis. All staff were involved in the review process which identified possible training needs. Staff had been trained in child protection and were aware of appropriate procedures. They had an understanding of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice.

Key strengths

- The happy, confident and polite nursery children.
- The hard-working, enthusiastic and caring nursery staff.
- The very positive relationships with children and parents.
- The commitment of the headteacher to the development and improvement of all aspects of the nursery.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

Two of the requirements made at the previous inspection had been addressed but one remained outstanding.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should review and develop the lay-out of the room to further improve opportunities for learning.
- Staff should ensure the range of resources available to children is appropriate to their stage of learning and development.
- Staff should extend and develop the programmes as set out in the report.

Requirements

- The entrance to the premises from which the nursery operates must be safe and fit for purpose. This is to comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument 2002 Number 114 Regulation 10 (1).

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.

Hazel Danskin
HM Inspectorate of Education