

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

26 January 2005

**Avonbridge Primary School Nursery Class
Main Street
Avonbridge
Falkirk
FK1 2NG**

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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Introduction

Avonbridge Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in October 2004 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. The nursery catered for pre-school children from age three to five. At the time of the inspection the roll was 11.

The environment

Standard 2

The overall quality of the accommodation was very good. The environment was clean and well maintained with careful attention given to health, safety and security matters. Play equipment was in good condition and children's work was attractively displayed throughout the nursery.

Space was used effectively and children were able to play independently or in groups. The outdoor area was fully enclosed with plans to further develop this area. A previous recommendation for the Council to review children's toilet facilities was underway. However, immediate action should be taken with regard to staff toilet facilities as there was no hot running water within this area. They were also in need of refurbishment. Risk assessments were carried out appropriately for nursery procedures.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff gave good emotional support to children. They had developed good relationships with them and had high expectations of behaviour. Staff had made a good start to observing and planning children's learning. However, these activities were not focused enough on the needs of individual children and next steps in their learning. For a few children the pace of learning was too slow and they were not challenged enough.

Children had access to a broad range of play activities. They had opportunities to exercise choice and take the initiative. All children engaged happily, were interested in, and actively participated in, the activities on offer. Staff provided many experiences for children, but did not interact enough with them to support and extend their learning. Individual collections of children's work were being compiled but these were not used enough to help monitor progress. Staff had good assessment, record keeping and reporting arrangements but these were not consistently impacting on children's learning and development.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children were given many opportunities to develop a range of skills in a relaxed environment. Most were confident and learning to care for themselves. They had made friendships with staff and other children. Children followed simple rules and were familiar with the nursery routine. Staff used praise and encouragement effectively. Children exercised choice, took responsibility for their learning and were independent. Children would have benefited from more adult intervention.
- The programme for communication and language was fair. Children listened well to other children and adults during social activities and play. They paid good attention to information and instructions. A few children used books appropriately to find interesting information. Some were developing early writing skills. Children used talk well during role-play. Overall, however, staff did not interact enough with children. They did not always encourage children to take part in conversations and discussions. A few children were not challenged enough. They would have benefited from more adult intervention.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was fair. Children were beginning to recognise patterns, shapes and colours. They were identifying and using numbers during play experiences and counting games. A few children used the computer well. Overall, staff needed to interact more with children to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in this aspect of their learning.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was fair. Staff provided regular experiences for children to investigate and explore a good range of painting and modelling activities. Children enjoyed art and craft experiences. However, a few of the art activities were inappropriate. Children had good opportunities to develop their imagination during role-play in the home corner and to take part in music and singing experiences. Children would have benefited from more adult intervention.
- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Staff planned effective and regular opportunities for energetic play both indoors and out-of-doors. Children enjoyed playing outside. They climbed confidently and balanced well. Children used their bodies confidently to express feelings. They were developing good control of their fingers and hands using construction toys, cutlery, brushes, pencils, the computer keyboard and mouse. Children handled equipment safely. Staff could have intervened more to challenge children.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff knew children and families very well and provided effective support to them. However, they did not always ensure that the pace of learning met the needs of individual children. Relationships with parents were positive and staff sought their views. They were kept well informed through useful newsletters, notice boards and parents' evenings. Parents supported the

nursery well through fund-raising activities and in assisting various initiatives such as the lending library. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied with the nursery. Staff shared regular written reports on children's progress with parents and passed appropriate information on to receiving primary schools. A range of good opportunities was provided for children to learn about hygiene and keeping safe. Appropriate personal hygiene routines were in place.

Staff had developed effective links with agencies to support children who required additional help. Staff had undertaken appropriate training which was helping them support individual children. They were aware of child protection arrangements and knew how to keep children safe and secure.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher was well organised and was respected by parents and staff. She communicated effectively with staff and parents. The summary leaflet about the nursery's plans for improvement provided parents with useful information. The headteacher and nursery staff had not yet received information on the Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice and the implications for staff.

The headteacher had been absent for two weeks prior to the inspection. There had recently been staff changes due to illness, but both members of staff present were trained and experienced in nursery education. One was on long-term supply. Staff had access to relevant training courses provided by the local authority, which was enabling them to develop their knowledge, skills and experiences in, for example, using the computer. The recently updated staff handbook provided staff with relevant information. New members of staff would benefit from some induction training on this.

The headteacher, with staff, had made a good start to evaluating their work. She had provided feedback to staff on their work. Development planning had improved aspects of provision. The headteacher, in consultation with staff, should continue to develop existing systems for monitoring and evaluating the nursery. She should now implement a more rigorous and systematic planned programme to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision.

Key strengths

- Well-behaved children who played well with each other.
- Positive relationships with parents.
- Good programmes in emotional, personal and social development and physical development and movement.
- The attractive environment and the plentiful supply of resources.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

Three of the four recommendations had been implemented. The issue of children's toilet facilities is currently being addressed by the council.

Recommendations for improvement

- Improve the programmes in communication and language, knowledge and understanding of the world and in expressive and aesthetic development to ensure children progress appropriately in these aspects.
- Planning and assessment arrangements should focus more closely on children's learning and be used more to guide staff interventions.
- The nursery teacher should provide more leadership and guidance for learning.
- Staff should interact more with children to support and extend their learning.
- The headteacher should implement a more rigorous and systematic planned programme to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision.

Requirements

- Fitness of premises. Immediate action should be taken to rectify the issue of no hot water being available within the staff toilet area. The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 (SSI 114)

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

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