

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

15 June 2005

Bankier Primary School Nursery Class
Bankier Road
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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

Bankier 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 52.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery was located in purpose-built accommodation within the primary school. The nursery entrance was alarmed. The nursery had one large playroom with adjoining toilet facilities and a small kitchen area. A safe, secure outdoor play area was accessed directly from the playroom. This had a large area with a soft, all-weather surface. However, a significant number of parents expressed concern about the damaged soft-play surface which was staining children's clothing with a tar-like substance which could not be removed. The headteacher had identified this issue in a recent health and safety audit. Staff should prepare a specific risk assessment for the outdoor area and record parents' concerns to enable more accurate monitoring of this ongoing problem. The headteacher and the education authority were aware that there were too few toilets for children in the nursery. The education authority planned to address this.

The layout of the nursery was good. Space was used effectively and children were able to play independently or in groups. Children had access to an additional classroom within the school where large physical play equipment was set out. The nursery also had timetabled slots to make use of the school gym hall and computer room.

Staff were very knowledgeable about all matters of health, safety and hygiene in the nursery. Two members of staff had completed elementary food hygiene training. Play equipment was regularly monitored and was in good condition.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had developed very good relationships with the children. They were welcoming, supportive and friendly. They knew the children well and responded effectively to their needs and interests. They interacted with them in a warm and caring manner but needed to make more use of open-ended questions to support and extend children's learning.

Staff planned a broad range of interesting experiences for the children. However, some children required more challenging activities to sustain their interest. Staff's written plans were flexible and took very good account of the needs of groups and individuals. Staff observed children at play and noted their responses to activities. They transferred this information to a detailed progress record for each child. Children had useful folios with dated samples of work which showed their progress over a period of time. These were shared with parents. Staff also completed very detailed comments on the nursery to P1 transition record.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Staff made very good use of praise to promote children's self esteem. Children were happy, settled and secure in the nursery routines. Many played well together and shared resources. They were developing friendships and becoming aware of the needs and feelings of others. Staff encouraged children to be independent in selecting and tidying resources. Children showed a good understanding of hygiene procedures and safety aspects at snack time.
- The programme for communication and language was good overall. Staff provided opportunities for children to develop skills in listening and talking in small groups. Children spoke confidently to adults and to each other. Most listened attentively at group story time. Staff had set out a small reading area which some children used well. However, staff needed to provide a wider range of books, including simple reference books. Children had some opportunities to write using notepads in the home corner. Staff set out a writing table for part of each week but needed to give children more regular opportunities to write using a wider range of materials.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Staff planned a wide range of experiences for children to learn about seasons and the weather. Children had grown bulbs, and they enjoyed taking part in baking and cooking activities. Staff made effective use of outings to help children understand the world around them. They encouraged children to explore the properties of sand and water. Children were becoming familiar with technology through the use of computers, and a Smartboard which many used confidently. There were some opportunities for counting during play activities but these needed to be extended to include other aspects of early mathematics. Children needed more opportunities to investigate and solve simple problems.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Children enjoyed role-play activities in the home corner. They knew the words to several songs and sang enthusiastically but had too few opportunities to use percussion instruments and listen to different types of music. Staff had set out a painting area and children had opportunities to make collages, print and create junk models. However, most art activities were adult directed. Children

needed free access to a wider range of materials to express their own ideas and feelings creatively in art and craft.

- The programme for physical development and movement was very good. Children were developing good control of their fingers and hands using paintbrushes, jigsaws, scissors and small construction materials. Staff placed a strong emphasis on developing children's physical fitness and planned daily energetic activities both indoors and outside. Children had daily access to the school gym and enjoyed taking part in an 'assault course'. Staff had set out an indoor area for large-scale physical play and children had opportunities to climb, slide, roll and balance using an interesting range of equipment. Children, and their parents, participated enthusiastically in 'circuit training' most days in the playground.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff provided very good support to children and families. Parents felt staff were very approachable and supportive. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with the nursery provision. Staff kept parents well informed about the work of the nursery through daily informal contact, regular newsletters and informative notice boards. Parents and carers supported the nursery well and had many opportunities to be involved in nursery activities and outings. Staff had developed very good arrangements to ensure a smooth transition from home to nursery and from nursery to P1.

Staff provided very good support for children with additional needs. They worked very closely with parents and health visitors to prepare detailed care plans for children with specific medical needs.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher provided very good leadership. She gave strong direction, guidance and support to staff and had a clear vision for the future development of the nursery. The deputy headteacher had some responsibility for aspects of monitoring and carried out her remit very effectively. Roles and responsibilities within the nursery were clearly set out and understood. The nursery had very good systems in place which promoted effective communication, relationships and consultation between staff, parents and children. The nursery staff worked very well as a team.

There were very good procedures for professional development and staff had attended a useful range of training courses. The headteacher had very good systems for organising all curricular and administrative policies. Staff were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice. They understood the school's child protection policies and procedures.

The management team visited the nursery regularly to monitor the overall quality of provision. They gave staff both written and verbal feedback on these visits. Staff and parents were involved in the continuous self-evaluation of the service. The nursery had

a detailed development plan with an appropriate set of priorities for improvement.

Key Strengths

- The very good relationships between staff and children.
- The very good programmes in emotional, personal and social development and physical development and movement.
- The level of support for children with additional needs.
- The very strong partnership with parents and carers.
- The teamwork and commitment of staff.
- The very effective leadership and management of the nursery.

Recommendations for improvement

- The school and the education authority should carry out a risk assessment of the outdoor area.
- Staff should provide a greater level of challenge in activities for some children.

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.

Anne Anderson
Care Commission

May Geddes
HM Inspectorate of Education