

**Integrated Inspection by the  
Care Commission and  
HM Inspectorate of Education of  
Beatlie School Nursery  
West Lothian Council**

**10 January 2007**

**Beatlie School Nursery  
The Mall  
Craigshill  
Livingston  
EH54 5EJ**

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.

<b>National Care Standard</b>	<b>Child at the Centre Quality Indicator</b>
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](http://www.carecommission.com) and HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

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  
Headquarters  
Care Commission  
Compass House  
Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

Hazel Dewart  
HM Inspectorate of Education  
Denholm House  
Almondvale Business Park  
Almondvale Way  
Livingston  
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](mailto:enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: [www.scottishombudsman.org.uk](http://www.scottishombudsman.org.uk).

A copy of the HMIE complaints procedure is available from the HMIE website at [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01506 600 258.

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# **Integrated Inspection by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education of Beatlie School Nursery West Lothian Council**

## **Introduction**

Beatlie School Nursery was inspected in October 2006 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 with moderate or complex additional support needs. It was registered for 12 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 21.

## **The environment**

### **Standard 2**

The two nursery classes were located within the main school building. They shared a sensory room, a soft play area, a jacuzzi room and a sensory garden with primary and secondary pupils. The nursery had its own secure outdoor play area with a safe surface. The playrooms were clean, bright, safe and secure. All areas of the building could be accessed by wheelchair users. Staff had made very good use of display areas in the foyer and notice boards beside the playrooms to give parents useful information leaflets and details of the wide range of support groups which parents could access locally. Playrooms were set out to support both group activities and individual development programmes. Staff made limited use of visual stimulus in playrooms and needed to make more use of pictures and displays of children's work.

Staff had carried out a series of useful risk assessments to ensure children's health and safety in the nursery and on outings.

## **Quality of children's experience**

### **Standard 4 & 5**

All staff were warm and very caring in their interactions with children. They had developed very good relationships with them and made very effective use of praise to encourage children and develop their confidence and self esteem. Staff interacted very effectively with children to explain things clearly and to introduce new words and ideas. The high staff-to-child ratio ensured each child received continuous support with their learning.

Staff organised an appropriate range of play experiences which encouraged children's individual responses and enabled them to learn through play. They were at the early stages of developing a new approach to planning experiences for children. Staff observed children at their activities and noted their responses. They knew children's strengths and development needs well but

had not yet developed systems for recording children's ongoing progress accurately. They kept parents very well informed through regular informal discussions, daily diaries and helpful written reports.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Staff had created a very happy, supportive playroom environment and children were secure in the daily routines. They were learning simple rules of hygiene such as washing their face and hands before eating. In exploratory play some children were successfully persevering with tasks. At snack time, staff effectively supported children as they participated in this social experience. Children responded positively to staff's encouragement during small group and individual play sessions. Staff made very good use of the nursery assembly to celebrate children's achievements.
- The programme for developing communication and language was very good. Staff provided a range of stimulating activities to help children make eye contact and develop good listening skills. For example, in a singing activity, children responded well to visual and oral prompts. Staff used questioning and a visual signs programme effectively to encourage responses from children. Some children were able to respond through signing and using pictorial symbols. Children listened and responded well to a range of songs and rhymes. Staff made very good use of picture books with individuals.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children were becoming familiar with their nursery environment both indoors and outside. They were learning about the roles of staff in the school. Children were successful in using the computer to match objects, and switches were also used effectively by children to activate a response. In their topic on autumn, children were learning about how the seasons change and they were able to feel prickly cones and smooth chestnuts. Staff supported children well in mixing ingredients to bake cakes. Children had some opportunities to use their senses, for example in tracking floating bubbles and feeling them burst on their skin. However, there was scope to extend the range of sensory experiences and make these a more regular feature of the programme.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Staff provided some role-play opportunities and children enjoyed choosing different hats to wear when they sang their 'hat song'. Children sang songs and had some experience of using percussion instruments. The music therapist encouraged individuals to experience and respond to a variety of sounds. Staff provided art activities, some of which involved pre-cut templates and were adult directed. Staff needed to provide a wider range of art materials and techniques more regularly to allow children to express their feelings and emotions creatively.

- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Staff worked closely with physiotherapists to develop children's movement and co-ordination. Staff provided a good range of small tools and equipment to develop children's control of their fingers and hands. However, some children who required support with reaching, holding and grasping, needed more appropriate materials to allow them to participate fully in activities. Children enjoyed their time in the soft play room and a few used wheeled toys well in the outdoor area. Staff had not yet developed a programme to ensure that children's skills were developed in a progressive way.

## **Support for children and families**

### Standard 6

Staff provided a high standard of care and support for children and families. Each child had a comprehensive Multi Agency Support Plan ( MASP ) with fully-integrated care routines to support specific needs. Staff had strong links with parents and visiting specialists and therapists which ensured children's additional needs were supported effectively. Parents were encouraged to make their views known and to share their concerns with staff. The depute headteacher had recently set up a parents' focus group to allow parents to have a more formal means of being involved in the life and work of the school.

Parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed a very high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the work of the nursery. Staff had developed very positive relationships with them and were extremely sensitive to individual circumstances. Parents valued the detailed and helpful comments made by the nursery teachers in the home/nursery diaries which supported two-way communication effectively. Staff had begun to establish links with a small number of partner centres which were attended by children who had split placements. To ensure continuity of experience and consistency of approach, nursery staff should clarify the roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in developing the MASP and ensure that its contents are shared with all partner centres.

## **Management**

### Standard 14

The headteacher provided very good leadership. She had delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the acting depute headteacher. They worked effectively together and met regularly to discuss the work of the nursery. Both were committed to the provision of a quality experience for all children. Staff teamwork was strong and effective. The headteacher, acting depute headteacher and staff were approachable and friendly. They had the respect of all parents and had established very good relationships with children and staff.

A concise set of policies supported the work of the nursery. These were available to parents and were regularly reviewed to reflect current national and local guidance. Staff were appropriately trained and were able to extend their professional skills and knowledge through a wide range of training courses. Staff met annually with the headteacher to review their professional development needs. They were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the

implications for their work. All staff had been trained in child protection and understood clearly their roles and responsibilities.

Through regular surveys and meetings, the nursery staff had begun to audit aspects of their work including staff interaction and the ethos of the nursery. This good practice needed to be extended to include a clearer focus on the quality of learning experiences for children. Staff had developed an improvement plan and were making good progress in taking forward the identified priorities.

## Key strengths

- The very good relationships between staff and children and the very effective interaction to support children's learning and development.
- The very good programmes in emotional, personal and social development and communication and language.
- The very effective partnerships with parents and carers and the high level of support for them.
- The commitment, enthusiasm and teamwork of staff.
- The effective management of the nursery and the good start made to monitoring and evaluating the nursery.

## Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

At the last Care Commission singleton inspection there was one Requirement relating to emergency evacuation of the soft play area. This had been passed to the education authority but had not been addressed. This Requirement has been carried forward to this report.

## Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should continue to develop their procedures for planning the curriculum and for assessing and recording children's progress.
- Staff should continue to develop sensory learning and art experiences for children.
- The headteacher should clarify the roles and responsibilities of all staff in developing the Multi Agency Support Plans and ensure plans are shared with all partner centres.

## Requirements

- The school and the education authority must ensure the safe evacuation of the soft play area in the event of an emergency. This is to comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument 2002 Number 114 Regulation (4) (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.

May Geddes  
HM Inspectorate of Education