

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Bo'ness Public School Nursery Class
Falkirk Council**

26 January 2005

**Bo'ness Public School Nursery Class
Stewart Avenue
Bo'ness
EH51 9NL**

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

Bo'ness Public 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 39.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery class was safe and secure. The playroom was in a good state of decoration and repair. Space was used effectively. The layout of the playroom allowed children to work independently, in small numbers or as part of a larger group. However, the designated outdoor play area was unsatisfactory and unsuitable for use by children. The surface was unsafe and, overall, this area was not well maintained.

Staff had introduced a recording system for cleaning within the nursery class. However, this system did not include enough information or detail which members of staff had been involved. Arrangements for risk assessments varied. Outings were appropriately risk assessed and recorded. However, staff had not recorded risk assessments in relation to premises. A number of infection control issues were identified during the inspection. These included no bacterial liquid soap available in children's toilets, a lack of a separate sink for cleaning art and craft materials and inappropriate storage of cleaning utensils in the kitchen area. Children's privacy and dignity was not always respected. A curtain was inappropriately draped at the entrance to children's toilets. This arrangement was not satisfactory in relation to health and safety. Information on individual children was not always held confidentially. This needed to be addressed.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had developed good relationships with children, who responded enthusiastically to them. Their use of praise and encouragement effectively developed children's confidence and self esteem. Children's contributions were encouraged and valued and they often took the initiative and expressed ideas clearly. Most staff interacted well with children. In particular, the nursery teacher engaged very effectively to support, challenge and extend children's learning. He had very good discussions with them and effectively used questions to make children think and reflect. However, a few staff would benefit from further support and training to enable them to interact more appropriately with children to help them learn.

The pace and organisation of sessions enabled children to take responsibility and make choices. However, sessions were shorter than they should have been. Overall, children were interested and engaged happily in a broad range of activities. They made good use of varied and challenging indoor experiences to investigate and make discoveries for themselves. There was a lack of activities to support children's physical development and movement. Children were motivated and staff took good account of their interests when planning. The nursery teacher had made good use of information from observations to plan and identify appropriate next steps for children. Most staff did not make enough use of assessment information to identify needs and plan next steps. Individual collections of children's work were not used to help monitor their progress.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good and children were making very good progress. They showed consideration for others, helped each other at the writing table and responded very well to simple rules and routines. Children were developing independence, for example at snack and in dressing and personal hygiene. They were learning to plan, express choices and make decisions. Children were developing positive attitudes towards each other. They played cooperatively, took turns and shared resources. Children expressed thoughts and feelings appropriately and staff made effective use of very good displays to encourage this.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. The nursery teacher worked very well and effectively supported children's progress in this aspect. Staff provided a very good range of activities and experiences throughout the nursery to develop early reading and writing skills. Children listened very well to adults and other children. They talked to other children and adults about themselves and their experiences. Children were learning to use sign language to communicate with some of their friends. They used books to find interesting information. Children anticipated and predicted events in well-known stories and were learning to evaluate books. They were developing an awareness of letter names and sounds. A few wrote their own names.
- The programme for developing children's knowledge and understanding was good. Children recognised patterns and shapes around them. They knew the differences between materials, such as wood and plastic. They sorted and categorised various materials into different groups. Children described colours and sizes well. They were developing good skills in information and communications technology (ICT). However, staff did not make enough use of the outdoor environment for children to explore, experiment and investigate using all of their senses.
- The programme in expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Staff had provided an extensive range of equipment and materials which children enjoyed experimenting with. Children expressed themselves well in paintings, collages and models whilst listening to taped music. They enthusiastically joined in singing action rhythms which related to other activities, such as counting. Staff had provided a very good range of unusual musical instruments.

Children experimented and expressed their thoughts and feelings well when music making. They were very imaginative and made very good use of activities and opportunities to role-play.

- The programme in physical development and movement was fair. Children were developing good control of their fingers and hands through using a range of equipment such as brushes, pencils, art, craft and snack equipment, the computer keyboard and the mouse. However, on account of the unsuitable outdoor area, children did not have enough opportunities to access energetic activity either indoors or outside. They had limited experiences outside to enjoy fresh air or to develop a feeling of well-being through outdoor physical activity.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff knew children and families very well and provided effective support to them. They responded appropriately and sensitively to children's individual circumstances, giving extra help when needed. Staff were knowledgeable about individual children and supported children with special needs effectively.

Good systems were in place for communicating with parents and carers. They were kept very well informed through notice boards, information sheets, regular informal discussions, planned meetings and activities, and more recently, through helpful written reports. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied. A few wanted to know more about how their children were progressing and how the nursery operated. Parents, whose children are now in their pre-school year were concerned that there had been no formal information provided last year regarding their progress. Staff had started to address this. Many parents were concerned about new staffing structures and the implications for their children's learning.

Staff passed appropriate information on children to P1 and other primary schools to support them when they moved. Most knew what to do to protect children in their care. However, staff were not all aware of the policy and procedure for child protection and some had not received appropriate training. The nursery teacher took an active role in liaising with parents and appropriately sought their views to improve available support. He accessed a range of agencies and professionals and they were working together to meet children's needs. This had resulted in, for example, improvements in supporting children's needs in the nursery and at home.

Management

Standard 14

At the time of the inspection the headteacher and depute headteacher had been in post for less than a year. They were beginning to provide good leadership and direction to staff. Both were strongly committed to the further development of the nursery. However, the roles of senior managers and lines of accountability had only recently been clarified and implemented in practice. The nursery teacher provided very effective support to the headteacher and managed the day-to-day running of the nursery very well. He was well organised, communicated effectively with staff and provided strong leadership and guidance to them. He had developed a comprehensive range of policies

and procedures to support staff. However, they were unaware of the Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice. They needed to access this document as soon as possible. The nursery team were hard working and appropriately qualified.

The headteacher and depute were at an early stage in developing systems to monitor the work of the nursery. They were beginning to implement helpful approaches to provide feedback to staff on their work. Appropriate priorities had been identified to improve aspects of provision. However, to support staff further, systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the nursery should be improved. The headteacher and depute, in consultation with staff, should implement a regular and systematic planned programme to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision.

Key strengths

- Well-behaved children who had very positive attitudes towards learning.
- High level of support for children and families.
- Effective inclusive approaches for all children.
- Very good programmes in emotional, personal and social development, communication and language, expressive and aesthetic development and children's progress in these aspects.
- Effective day-to-day leadership and management of the nursery teacher.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

The recommendations from the last inspection were, where possible, actioned by the service. Where recommendations required action to be taken by the local authority, some of those recommendations remain outstanding. The building had been partly renovated. However, there are some outstanding pieces of work to be completed.

Recommendations for improvement

- Improve the programme for physical development and movement.
- Provide more training for some staff in child development to enable them to interact more effectively with children.
- The staff team should access updated training in child protection and guidance regarding key roles.
- The senior management team should continue to provide leadership and direction for staff and implement a systematic programme to monitor and evaluate nursery practice.
- Information regarding individual children should be held in a confidential manner.

Requirements

- Action must be taken in relation to the infection control issues identified during the inspection and contained in the body of the report. Timescale 1 month.
SSI 2001/114 Regulation 4.1 (d)
- The system for recording risk assessment must be implemented. Timescale 3 months.
SSI 2001/114 Regulation 4.1 (a).
- Action must be taken to improve the outdoor play area ensuring suitability for access by service users. Timescale to be agreed with Falkirk Council.
SSI 2001/114 Regulation 10.2 (a) (if appropriate)

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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