

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

18 April 2007

**Bowhouse Primary School Nursery Class
Tinto Drive
Grangemouth
FK3 0DZ**

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 should write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330 (fax 0800 377 7331) or e-mail ask@spsso.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.spsso.org.uk.

A copy of the HMIE complaints procedure is available from the HMIE website at www.hmie.gov.uk or by telephoning 01506 600 258.

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Introduction

Bowhouse Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in November 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. An inspection of the primary school was carried out at the same time by HMIE and is the subject of a separate report. 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 31.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery operated from a spacious and bright playroom within the school building. The accommodation was safe and secure. Staff made good use of the well-resourced outdoor play area, which was accessible from the playroom, to promote children's energetic play and interest in nature. They also regularly used the school gym hall for planned physical activity with children. Staff had created a welcoming and stimulating environment and displayed children's art work and photographs effectively throughout the playroom. Space had been organised well to allow children to play by themselves and in small groups.

Staff had developed a number of useful risk assessments for the building, and these were regularly reviewed. Appropriate procedures were in place to help control the spread of infection.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had developed warm, caring, and positive relationships with children. They intervened sensitively in play activities and made very good use of questions and dialogue to support and challenge children in their learning. Children were enthusiastic in their play and had very good opportunities to exercise choice. Staff provided a good balance between those activities children could choose for themselves and those directed by adults.

Staff had very good procedures in place for planning children's learning. They made regular formal and informal observations of children's learning. These observations were saved efficiently and used to plan future activities. Staff linked their observations of children to individual assessment records effectively. They maintained useful 'Happy Snaps' books which detailed children's

learning, containing written observations, photographs of their achievements and samples of art work. These were shared regularly with parents.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were enthusiastic and motivated in the nursery. They selected activities confidently and were encouraged to vote and give their opinions on activities such as stories and what they had for snack. Staff had created a caring environment where children played happily together. They made good use of praise to acknowledge achievements and used a 'friendly fish' to promote positive behaviour and raise self esteem. Children were relaxed, happy and familiar with simple rules and routines. They were developing strong friendships and caring attitudes towards each other. Staff encouraged children to take responsibility for tasks such as serving themselves at snack and tidying toys after play.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Staff provided very good opportunities to develop children's skills in listening and talking. Children benefited from a book-lending scheme and 'Teddy Bear', a home link diary. Staff listened carefully to children and used dialogue effectively to extend children's learning. Children listened attentively to a story being told by an adult and confidently contributed to discussions. Most children were able to recognise their name in print and were developing an awareness of letter sounds and rhyming. Staff provided many opportunities for children to develop early writing skills and an awareness of print throughout the playroom.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Staff provided effective opportunities through play for children to develop skills in counting and mathematical processes. They also used outings and visitors well to help children learn about the local and wider environment. Children had many opportunities to investigate and learn about the natural world when using the garden area. They had enjoyed planting, digging for worms, finding out about changes in the weather and observing the life cycle of butterflies. Staff provided opportunities for children to learn about their own and other cultures through the celebration of a variety of festivals and through topic work, such as finding out about houses around the world when discussing different homes.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Staff provided a suitable range of activities for children to express themselves freely and creatively using a variety of art and craft materials. Children's role-play was very imaginative when playing at the 'estate agent's' and when pretending to move house. They enjoyed extended periods of acting out and were involved in developing their characters. Staff interacted well to support and extend their play. They had created very good opportunities for children to make their own music and explore and investigate a variety of percussion instruments both inside the playroom and outside in the garden area. Children participated happily

and enthusiastically in group singing and knew a range of songs and rhymes.

- The programme for physical development and movement was very good. Staff encouraged children in health and fitness through daily 'brain gym' exercises and drinking water at the beginning of each session. Children had regular access to the school gym and staff planned a programme of energetic physical play that developed the children's ball skills and their awareness of space. They were gaining skills in climbing when using the climbing frame in the playroom. Outside in the garden area, they used a variety of wheeled toys and were able to run, jump and slide. They enjoyed finding out about what their bodies could do and were developing confidence. Staff provided a wide range of activities for children to develop their hands and finger control through the use of writing tools, scissors, play dough tools and when wrapping items in bubble wrap when pretending to move house.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff worked effectively with parents to provide very good support for children and families. Parents had opportunities to help in the playroom and they organised the nursery lending library. There was nursery parent representation on the school board. Parents were kept informed about the nursery by regular newsletters, helpful notice boards, together with photographs and written explanations of children's learning. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and those spoken to on the day of the inspection, were very happy with all aspects of the provision.

There was a well-planned programme for induction which supported children before starting school. Older children from the primary school regularly worked alongside nursery children. Children had opportunities to find out about moving to P1 through a pictorial information book, which they could share with parents, and visits to the P1 class. Information on children's progress was appropriately shared with parents and the receiving P1 teacher.

Senior managers had a clear understanding of legislation for supporting children who required additional help with their learning and training for all staff had been planned. Staff had developed useful links with an appropriate range of other professionals to support the learning and care needs of individual children. They had created clear individualised educational programmes for those children who needed them. These were shared with parents and reviewed regularly.

Management

Standard 14

The management of the nursery was good. The recently appointed headteacher was developing positive relationships with staff and valued their work. The deputy headteacher had responsibility for managing aspects of the nursery class. She had formed good relationships with the staff team and worked regularly in the playroom. The skilled senior early years officer led the cohesive staff team well, and together they showed a commitment to the future development of the nursery. They were

open and approachable and had developed very good relationships with parents and children.

Staff had developed an appropriate range of policies and procedures which guided their practice and provided useful information to parents. Child protection guidelines were followed appropriately and all staff were aware of their responsibilities in protecting children. Annual staff reviews identified staff training and development needs, and staff had access to a good range of training opportunities. Senior managers and staff were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and their implications.

Staff had used national indicators of performance to evaluate the quality of playroom provision. Information gathered had supported the creation of a development plan with clear targets for improvement. The depute headteacher and staff had developed a quality assurance overview for the current session. The depute headteacher monitored the quality of the service informally when working in the playroom. The headteacher had yet to develop procedures to formally monitor the quality of all aspects of the nursery.

Key strengths

- Staff's effective use of questioning and their very positive relationships with children.
- The procedures for planning and recording children's progress and the support given to children who require additional help with their learning.
- The relationships between staff and parents and the involvement of parents in their child's learning.
- The curriculum programmes in each of the key aspects of children's learning.
- The very skilled, committed and hardworking staff team.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

At the last Care Commission singleton inspection there were two recommendations which have been addressed by the nursery. There was one requirement relating to Falkirk Council's recruitment and selection process. Falkirk Council have made good improvement and have until March 2007 to fully comply.

Recommendations for improvement

- The senior management team should develop further procedures for systematically monitoring the quality of all aspects of the nursery.

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.

Christine Dow
Clark Graham
HM Inspectorate of Education