

**Camelon Nursery
Falkirk Council
20 January 2010**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects centres in order to let parents¹, children and the local community know whether their centre provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with centre staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the head of centre and staff about the strengths of the centre, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into playrooms and join other activities which children are involved in. We also gather the views of parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the centre. We describe how well children are doing, how good the centre is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the centre. We also comment on how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the centre is led and how all staff help the centre achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals. Where applicable, you will also be able to find descriptions of good practice in the centre.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends

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1. The centre

Camelon Nursery was inspected in December 2009 by HMIE on behalf of both HMIE and the Care Commission as part of the integrated inspection programme. The nursery caters for pre-school children aged six weeks to five years. It is registered for 90 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 78 at the time of the inspection.

Camelon Nursery opened in August 2009 following the merger of Glenfair Nursery School and Camelon Children's Centre. The nursery is jointly led by the head of centre and the manager.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Welcoming and caring ethos based on respect.
- Happy, confident children.
- Staff's positive relationships with children and their families.
- Support for children with additional needs.
- Strong teamwork of all staff in caring for children and providing a stimulating and attractive learning environment.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Babies are happy and well settled in the nursery. They are curious and use their senses to explore their surroundings. They are gaining increasing confidence in balance and walking. Children aged two to three confidently engage in a wide range of activities and are becoming aware of each other as they play. They share toys and are learning to take turns. All enjoy listening to stories and music. They become engrossed in role-play in the home corner and when playing with toys. Children aged three to five enjoy nursery and are making good progress in their learning. They confidently choose from a wide range of activities and are becoming increasingly independent. Children cooperate well with each other and are developing special friendships.

Children aged three to five are confident using the computer and interactive whiteboard. They enjoy experimenting with digital cameras and electronic toys. They are becoming more familiar with the natural

world as they experience activities such as planting bulbs. They need further opportunities to investigate natural materials and to learn outdoors. All children have daily access to outdoors and are making good progress in developing physical skills. They enjoy climbing and balancing challenges. Children are developing good hand/eye control through a range of activities such as painting, craft and modelling activities.

Children aged three to five are making good progress in their learning. Most recognise their name in print and are becoming familiar with letter sounds. They successfully explore early writing and drawing. They need more opportunities to develop literacy skills across a wider range of play activities. Children listen well and follow simple instructions. They enjoy listening to stories and singing together. They talk confidently to staff and each other. Children are familiar with number symbols and enjoy counting while playing. Most can match and sort by colour and recognise and name shapes. A few children need more challenging activities to ensure that they make better progress in early maths.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff provide a balanced curriculum which is based on play. Babies and toddlers engage in a range of stimulating activities which promote curiosity and learning through the senses. For children aged three to five, the curriculum covers key aspects of children's development and learning. Staff take good account of *Curriculum for Excellence* and children's interests to plan activities. They need to embed early literacy in more play activities. The programme for physical development is being used well to develop children's physical skills. Children have good opportunities to make choices in their learning and are developing independence. Children's creativity is encouraged through painting, drawing and model making opportunities. Visits out into the local community enrich the children's learning experiences. Children require more opportunities to develop their understanding of the natural world and early science through exploration and investigation, particularly outdoors. A few members of staff use

questioning, discussion and dialogue effectively to extend and support children's thinking and learning. Staff take good account of children's views when planning and talk to them about what they have learned. Arrangements for setting children into nursery and for moving on to another room are very effective.

Staff place the learning and development needs of children at the centre of their work. A key worker system is working well. Staff have established very positive relationships with children and their families. They successfully involve parents in their child's learning and development by sharing information about their child's progress and achievement. Staff work effectively with parents and partner agencies to support children with additional support needs. Most staff use observations of children's learning effectively to identify next steps and ensure that most activities are sufficiently challenging. However, a few children are not sufficiently motivated and stimulated by the activities on offer. They need greater challenge to sustain their interest and engage them more fully in learning. Children need to be more meaningfully involved in talking about their learning and what they will learn next.

4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?

Staff have created a warm and welcoming environment in the nursery. Parents are happy with the level of their involvement and the positive relationships that they have with all nursery staff. They find staff approachable and helpful. Staff share information with parents on a daily basis and keep them informed about the nursery through newsletters and notice boards. A parents' committee has recently been established and is supportive of the work of the nursery. The nursery staff work sensitively and very effectively when settling new children and are responsive to the needs of families. Parents appreciate the support and reassurance given to them by staff during settling in times. Good relationships with local primary schools have been established.

5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?

Staff are committed to improving the work of the nursery. The staff team have been working together with the manager and head of centre to evaluate aspects of their work and identify priorities for improvement. The head of centre and manager are aware of the need to observe and monitor playroom learning more rigorously. Psychological services have supported training to build teamwork and raise morale following the merger. This has been very successful resulting in a strong sense of teamwork. Members of staff are developing their skills and knowledge through relevant training opportunities. Parents and children are involved through consultation and staff are aware that this could be increased by using different ways of gathering their views.

6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?

Staff are caring in their work with children. They provide a welcoming and supportive learning environment where everyone is valued and made to feel welcome. Children are treated equally, with fairness and respect. Staff use praise well to encourage children in their learning and behaviour. They help to develop children's social skills by encouraging them to share and take turns. They understand their responsibility to keep children safe. They promote aspects of health at snack and lunches. Children participate in tooth-brushing activities and are helped to develop independence in personal care.

7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?

The manager and head of centre have recently started to work together under new arrangements for joint management and leadership of the nursery. They are beginning to form a view on the strengths and areas for improvement having conducted reviews and audits with staff. Senior management team remits are being reviewed

and clarified now that the initial priority for building the team has successfully been met. The head of centre and manager encourage staff to take responsibility and lead initiatives. Staff have responsibility for leading eco work and the physical development programme. The staff are well supported by the local authority in taking forward improvements. The nursery is well placed to continue to improve.

8. What happens next?

As a result of the good quality of education provided by the centre, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its centre.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- Develop the use of observational assessment to ensure learning activities are appropriately challenging for all children.
- Involve children more in planning and talking about their learning.
- Increase opportunities for learning outdoors.
- Continue to develop rigorous and systematic self-evaluation to bring about improvement.

Quality indicators help centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a centre. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish centres are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Camelon Nursery.

Improvements in performance	good
Children's experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

HM Inspector: Belinda Greer
20 January 2010

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means	outstanding, sector leading
very good	means	major strengths
good	means	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	means	major weaknesses

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