

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

**20 June 2007**

**Carmuir Primary School Nursery  
Carmuir Street  
Camelon  
Falkirk  
FK1 4PZ**

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 acting 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

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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 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](mailto:ask@spsso.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk).

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

## **Introduction**

Carmuir Primary School Nursery was inspected in March 2007 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. It was registered for 20 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 37.

## **The environment**

### **Standard 2**

The nursery was accommodated in a spacious playroom within the school building. Staff had created a bright and stimulating environment and displayed children's art work effectively throughout the playroom. They had created interesting low-level displays which children could explore and investigate. Equipment was well maintained. There was direct access to a large, fully-enclosed outdoor play area from the playroom. The play area had a variety of surfaces which provided children with opportunities for different kinds of play in a secure environment. Staff regularly used the school gym hall and library for planned activities with children. Appropriate procedures were in place to help control the spread of infection.

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

### **Standard 4 & 5**

Staff had very good relationships with children. They intervened sensitively in play activities and made very good use of questions and dialogue to support and extend children's learning. Children were enthusiastic in their learning. They could freely choose from a suitably wide range of activities and resources. Staff provided a good balance between those activities children could choose for themselves and those led by adults.

Staff had very good procedures in place for planning children's learning. They had recently changed procedures for recording children's progress. They made regular formal and informal observations of children and recorded these in individual profiles. Staff used the information gathered to identify next stages in learning. They gathered a few samples of children's drawings but children were not yet involved in selecting samples of work. The organisation of children's assessment documentation did not allow parents sufficient opportunities to share in, and contribute to, this information.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were happy in the nursery and comfortable with simple routines. Staff had high expectations of children's behaviour and good manners were displayed. Children were aware of basic rules of hygiene and staff supported them well in a tooth-brushing programme. Staff encouraged children to develop independence in personal tasks. Children served themselves snacks and tidied away when they finished. They shared toys and cooperated amicably when playing at activities. They took turns when riding bicycles and other wheeled toys outdoors.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Staff provided a range of high-quality activities to develop children's skills in listening and talking. Children listened well to instructions and enjoyed story-telling sessions in small groups. Staff provided an environment rich in print. Children had very good opportunities to develop skills in mark making at the well-resourced writing area and when using diaries and notebooks at play activities. Most children could recognise their name in print, and many were attempting to write it. Children had access to an appropriate range of texts and other printed materials which they used independently at the comfortable book corner, as well as at low-level displays and when playing throughout the playroom.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Children accessed simple computer programs independently and used a programmable floor toy when learning about directions. They used 'walkie talkies' and toy kitchen appliances well during imaginary play. Children were developing good skills in mathematics through play. Most could count to at least ten, and they played matching and sorting games. They enjoyed counting their scores when playing darts. Children planted and tended bulbs and seedlings, and observed their growth and change. They investigated the effect of light on coloured liquids and transparent plastic. They used magnifiers and viewers to explore a range of natural materials when playing outdoors.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Children enjoyed playing imaginatively in the home corner and dressing up. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to develop musical skills. Children joined in enthusiastically with singing games and used percussion instruments expressively. They explored loud and soft sounds when using wind chimes outdoors. A few children danced expressively to recorded music they had selected to play. Children rolled and shaped dough skilfully. Staff provided good opportunities for children to select freely from a wide range of materials for collage and model making. Children mixed thick paints with sponge rollers and used a mirror to observe their features when drawing pictures of themselves.
- The programme for physical development and movement was very good. Children were developing good hand and finger control through the use of writing tools, craft utensils

and when threading beads for example. Staff regularly took children outdoors for physical play and to get fresh air. Children climbed, crawled, slid and jumped when playing at suitably challenging fixed equipment. They were developing skills at throwing, catching and kicking balls. They rode wheeled toys well. Indoors, children enthusiastically bounced on a trampette which they accessed independently. Staff organised an appropriate movement programme in the gym each week.

## **Support for children and families**

### **Standard 6**

Staff offered very good support to children and their families. Parents had access to nursery policies and the development plan. They were kept informed of the work of the nursery through well-organised notice boards and an informative handbook. Staff organised regular newsletters, and parents had access to playroom plans and snack menus. Parents could contribute to the planning process by using a 'suggestions' box. They had access to a dedicated parents' room where they could meet together. They accompanied children on outings, and staff were organising procedures to allow parents to work regularly in the playrooms. Children enjoyed having the opportunity to take home 'Henry Hippo' and 'Nellie Elephant' to share with parents. Parents had good opportunities to discuss their children's progress with staff. Parents who completed the nursery questionnaire and who were spoken with during the inspection were happy with the work of the nursery.

Senior managers had effective referral procedures in place for identifying children with additional support needs. Staff, parents and other professionals worked well together to support the needs of individual children. Individualised educational programmes (IEPs) containing clear targets had been created for those children requiring them. Plans were in place to review the progress made in achieving these targets. Staff worked well with colleagues from a local family centre to support the social and emotional needs of specific children who took part in a 'nurture group'. Appropriate transition procedures were in place to support those children starting P1. The P1 teacher had developed good relationships with nursery children during her weekly visits to the playroom.

## **Management**

### **Standard 14**

Management of the nursery was very good. The acting headteacher was open and approachable. She had established good relationships with the staff team, who felt supported in their roles. The acting headteacher had devolved aspects of management responsibility to the hardworking principal teacher. Their roles and responsibilities were well defined and shared with all staff. The principal teacher met regularly with the nursery teacher to discuss playroom practice. The nursery teacher had a sound knowledge of early childhood development and, together, they had a clear vision for the development of the nursery. An appropriate annual system of staff development and review was in place. Staff had access to a suitable range of training opportunities to develop further their skills and knowledge.

Staff had a sound understanding of nursery policies and procedures. They had been trained in, and were aware of their

roles and responsibilities for, the protection of children. Senior managers and staff were aware of the implications of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice for the nursery.

The principal teacher and staff evaluated the quality of the work of the nursery annually, using national indicators of performance. They had started to evaluate the quality of aspects of playroom provision during team meetings. Plans were in place to obtain the views of parents through a questionnaire. A comprehensive development plan was in place containing clear targets for improvement. Senior managers regularly monitored the progress made in achieving these targets. The principal teacher monitored playroom plans and aspects of staff practice, providing useful written feedback for staff. This had a positive impact on the quality of provision.

## **Key strengths**

- The well-motivated and very well-behaved children.
- Very good interaction between staff and children and the effective intervention of staff to extend children's learning.
- High quality of the curriculum.
- Very positive relationships with parents.
- Effective management and the commitment of staff to the nursery's development.

## **Other Issues**

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

At the last Care Commission singleton inspection there was one recommendation to the effect that Falkirk Council should upgrade the nursery toilet area to include a changing facility. This had not been done.

## **Recommendations for improvement**

- Staff should further develop systems for recording children's progress to allow parents to freely share in, and contribute to, this information.

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.

Clark Graham  
HM Inspectorate of Education