

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Castlefield Primary School
Nursery Class
South Lanarkshire Council**

22 February 2006

**Castlefield Primary School Nursery Class
Maple Terrace
Greenhills
East Kilbride
G75 9EG**

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
Compass House	Almondvale Business Park
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 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. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.scottishombudsman.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

Castlefield Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in November 2005 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. 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 80 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 43.

The environment

Standard 2

The accommodation offered a safe and hygienic environment which was in a reasonable state of decoration and repair. A secure entry system was monitored effectively by staff. The accommodation was spacious and included three playrooms, kitchen and reception area. The playrooms were bright and equipment was clean and well maintained.

Staff had created a welcoming and pleasant learning environment. They displayed children's art work attractively and provided useful information for parents. Children had access to a good range of resources which were well organised to support children's learning and choices. However, staff needed to make more effective use of the available space.

Good procedures were in place to reduce the spread of infection. The headteacher had recognised the need to extend risk assessments to include outdoor play and activities within the playroom. Suitable arrangements were in place for fire safety and first aid.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had established good relationships with children. They were caring and made some use of praise to promote children's confidence and self esteem. However, there were insufficient opportunities for children to express their own views and make their own choices, particularly at the art and craft area, where activities were adult led and over directed. Yet children remained cheerful and concentrated well.

Staff interacted with children but did not always make effective use of questioning to support or extend children's learning. Some older boys, in particular, required more challenge in their

construction play. Others needed support in their imaginative play. Staff needed to provide more effective support for extending children's learning through play experiences.

Staff planned a good range of activities, covering all five key aspects of children's learning. However, planning was not sufficiently responsive to individual children's needs and interests.

Staff had good arrangements for observing, assessing and recording progress. However, they needed to make better use of this information to plan for children's next steps in learning. Parents were well informed about their children's progress through daily contact, a new 'child-friendly scrapbook' and a transition record for P1.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children were happy, safe and secure in the nursery and familiar with daily routines and simple rules. They were developing confidence and were learning to share and cooperate with each other in the nursery space station. They were beginning to develop particular friendships. Staff did not provide sufficient opportunities for developing children's independence in choosing, organising and tidying up during play. Children helped to set the table for snack but were not encouraged to take responsibility for the snack preparation.
- The programme for communication and language was good. Staff provided some good opportunities for developing children's skills in talking, listening, reading and writing. Children listened well to detailed instructions from adults. They listened to each other and talked confidently as they played. Staff had provided a good range of books in the attractive story corner to enable children to find information and enjoy listening to and reading stories. Children could recognise their name in print and some could write it. They were developing early writing skills at the spaceship where they scribbled and made marks on their clipboards. However, at the writing area children used colouring-in sheets. Staff needed to provide more appropriate opportunities for children to make marks or write in other contexts.
- The programme for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children were using their senses to explore the sand and dough. They were aware of changes in the weather and trees and had been collecting autumn fruits and leaves for an interactive classroom display. Staff had provided good opportunities for children to use mathematical processes such as sorting, matching, grouping and counting. Children counted down confidently from ten as the nursery spaceship was launched. However, throughout the session, there were insufficient opportunities for children to experiment, design and make and solve simple problems in their play. Children were becoming familiar with the early years setting and places in the local area such as Calderglen Park through regular educational excursions arranged by staff.

- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Children were completely absorbed in role-play in the nursery spaceship and control centre. They listened to space music and responded appropriately as they played. Staff had designated areas for children to paint, draw and glue. However, many activities were adult directed, with emphasis on finished products rather than on creative experiences for children. There were insufficient opportunities for children to use their drawings or paintings to investigate and explore line, shape, form and colour. Children enjoyed whole-class music and movement sessions.
- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Staff provided twice-weekly sessions for children's energetic play in the gym hall. They organised whole-class music and movement sessions. However, they did not make efficient use of the secure school grounds or indoor space to provide sufficient opportunities for children's free energetic play. Children used a range of tools including scissors, brushes, pens and construction toys effectively to develop control of their fingers and hands.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had established very effective working relationships with parents and a wide range of other professionals, including the health visitor, educational psychologist and speech therapists to support children and families. They liaised regularly with the school-based Surestart team and, together, they effectively supported children's smooth transition to nursery. Parents were encouraged by staff to attend classes on a range of educational and health issues.

Staff kept parents informed of current interests in regular newsletters, and through a well-organised notice board and informative parents' handbook. Parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied with almost all aspects of the nursery.

Parents supported the nursery through fund raising and with help on outings. Those parents interviewed spoke very positively about their involvement in educational excursions.

There was a very good planned programme of induction for children transferring to P1. Children and staff had very good opportunities to meet and share information.

Children who required additional support were identified promptly using effective screening procedures. Staff had drawn up with parents and relevant agencies individualised educational programmes for children. There was an appropriate match between children's needs and the programme offered. They met regularly to plan, review and share good practice in supporting individual children.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher provided very good leadership. She had a clear vision for the future development of the nursery. She fostered effective working relationships with staff, parents and children. She was highly committed, acted as a good role model for staff and demonstrated a high level of professional competence. Her

areas of management responsibility were clearly defined and explained to staff and parents.

She was well supported by the depute headteacher who had responsibility for the day-to-day organisation of the nursery. The depute headteacher was supportive of staff and met regularly with them for planning and staff meetings.

Staff were hard working and committed to developing their professional knowledge and undertook a range of appropriate training courses to extend their expertise. Staff development was well matched to the needs of the nursery and to individuals through an effective system of review and continual professional development.

The nursery had an extensive set of policies and procedures which provided appropriate guidance to staff and parents on all aspects of the work of the nursery. Staff followed guidelines on child protection appropriately and were clear about their role in relation to any issues. They were also aware of the need to register with the Scottish Social Services Council.

The management team visited the nursery regularly and monitored the quality of the work taking place in the playroom. Staff worked closely to support each other in the weekly planning process. Nursery staff were not yet fully involved in using evaluation tools to improve further the work of the nursery. The headteacher had identified the need to develop a more rigorous systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of the service.

Key strengths

- Commitment of staff to enriching children's learning experiences through educational excursions and outings in the local community.
- Very good support for children with additional support needs.
- Very strong links with other agencies and community groups for supporting children and their families.
- The headteacher's very effective leadership of the service.

Recommendations for improvement

- The staff should continue to improve questioning, dialogue and interaction with children to develop children's interests and to meet their needs more effectively.
- Staff should use observations to plan more effectively for next steps in children's learning.
- The senior management team and staff should improve the quality of learning programmes as identified in this report.
- The senior management team and staff should develop a more rigorous system for monitoring and evaluating nursery provision.

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.

Isobel Sheridan
Care Commission

Pat Appleby
HM Inspectorate of Education