

**Integrated Inspection by the  
Care Commission and  
HM Inspectorate of Education of  
Cauldeen Primary School Nursery Class  
The Highland Council**

**13 April 2005**

**Cauldeen Primary School Nursery Class  
Mackay Road  
Inverness  
IV2 4HZ**

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

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](http://www.carecommission.com) and HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

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## **Introduction**

Cauldeen Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in September 2004 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. At the time of the inspection the roll was 34.

## **The environment**

### **Standard 2**

The nursery was situated in a classroom of the infant department within the primary school. The nursery shared an entrance corridor, central work space and physical activity room with the infant department. The door to the nursery was alarmed, but in general, security throughout the school was inadequate. Management had identified the need to take action to improve security procedures within the building.

The nursery accommodation was bright, clean and pleasant. It was attractively decorated and enhanced by displays of children's paintings and photographs.

The toilet provision was poor, having only one toilet accessible from the playroom. It was not suitably ventilated. Staff needed to ensure that the hot water temperature for hand washing was maintained within safe limits to reduce the risk of scalding. Equipment in the playroom was clean and well maintained. The nursery had a range of play materials which were readily accessed by staff.

Children had opportunity for energetic play in a room set aside for physical play and in the enclosed outdoor space at the far side of the playground. A set of steps led down to the room for energetic play. This made access to the activities for children who use wheelchairs difficult. Only one window in the nursery class opened. There was no direct emergency exit from that room. Plans had been drawn up to replace windows and create fire exits.

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

### **Standard 4 & 5**

Staff had created a warm and welcoming environment throughout the nursery. They had formed good relationships with children and were positive and responsive in their interactions with them

during free play activities. Children were happy, secure, relaxed and settled. Staff used praise and encouragement effectively to develop children's confidence and self esteem. Increased use of questioning and dialogue would further extend children's learning.

During free play, children had opportunities to work individually or in small groups. However, the large number of children involved in set group activities reduced the opportunity for them to explore, question and discuss their ideas and experiences. Staff planned activities around themes and seasonal topics which included a focus for observation of children. They were adapting systems to ensure that assessment was manageable and that information gathered was used to plan for children's next steps in learning effectively. Parents had both formal and informal opportunities to discuss their child's progress with staff. Where appropriate, staff provided a home-nursery link diary to provide additional information to parents.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children were happy and beginning to settle into nursery routines. They were developing an awareness of simple rules. Staff made good use of praise to acknowledge good behaviour and build children's confidence and self esteem. Most children related well to staff and to each other. Children showed independence in hand washing, tooth brushing, selecting snack and tidying away toys. Staff needed to extend opportunities for children to show initiative and persevere with tasks.
- The programme for communication and language was good. Children listened to each other and adults during free play. Staff read stories with good expression to encourage children's interest in books but few made independent use of the cosy book corner. They provided a range of writing materials in the home corner, including notepads and a directory, and a writing table was always available. However, they needed to make better use of space within the playroom, to allow children access to a range of stimulating writing experiences in play.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. On a recent walk in the local area, children had enjoyed collecting leaves as part of an autumn display. The display included berries, books and pictures which staff had carefully arranged to make children aware of seasonal changes. Children could identify different fruits and vegetables using their senses of sight, smell and touch. They enjoyed playing with sand and water. They were able to recognise colours and count simple numbers. Staff were aware of the need to develop children's early number skills further through play.
- In expressive and aesthetic development the programme was good. Children enjoyed playing a range of musical instruments independently. They sang enthusiastically in a small group to the accompaniment of instruments. They expressed themselves through simple movement and piano music. Overall, there were too few opportunities and resources, such as dressing-up costumes, to promote children's dramatic role-play. Children took part in a range of

art and craft activities such as painting, printing, modelling and collage work. Staff needed to encourage children to use a wider range of materials to support their creativity and self-expression further.

- The programme for physical development and movement was very good. Children were developing good finger and hand movement using construction toys, computers, scissors and jigsaws. They moved imaginatively to music. Staff encouraged children to be active and develop physical skills using a range of equipment indoors. Children were learning to climb, crawl and throw and catch balls. They needed more regular energetic play out-of-doors.

## **Support for children and families**

### **Standard 6**

Staff had developed good relationships with children and their families. Staff were sensitive and responsive in their approach and offered good support to meet differing needs. The nursery provided useful information for parents through the handbook, notice boards, displays, newsletters and workshops. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with most aspects of the nursery. The nursery had identified partnership with parents as a focus for their development plan.

The nursery had well-developed links with local playgroups through cluster group partnership. Playgroup children visited the nursery at various times throughout the year. The nursery had very good liaison with external agencies. Staff had a clear understanding of procedures to support children with additional needs and individualised educational programmes were prepared, where appropriate.

An informal programme of induction for children moving on to primary was in place with reciprocal visits for primary and nursery staff and children within the school.

## **Management**

### **Standard 14**

The headteacher had delegated responsibility to the depute headteacher. The day-to-day organisation of the nursery was delegated to the effective nursery coordinator teacher. Together, they provided good leadership. The nursery coordinator teacher was enthusiastic and committed to the continued development of the nursery. The depute headteacher had developed good relationships with staff and was approachable and open. The school development plan had targeted partnership with parents as a priority for improvement. The depute headteacher had also identified early mathematics and equal opportunities as areas in need of development. He should now clearly define these improvements, and share further detail with staff. Staff were hardworking and conscientious and were beginning to take responsibility for aspects of nursery planning, supported by the nursery coordinator teacher.

The nursery had a good range of policies and procedures in place. The depute headteacher was the designated coordinator for child protection. There was a need for some staff to revisit these procedures and familiarise themselves with policy. Staff had a wide range of appropriate qualifications in early years

education and childcare. The adult/child ratio met national standards. The depute headteacher had initiated a staff development review system for early years' workers who undertook additional training. Almost all staff had been reviewed. Staff used their individual skills and responsibilities well to support the work of the nursery.

Self-evaluation had been undertaken in the nursery to inform the school development plan. The depute headteacher should implement more formal procedures for systematically and rigorously monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the nursery's work and children's progress in learning, in consultation with the nursery coordinator teacher. The depute headteacher should raise staff awareness of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice.

## **Key strengths**

- The caring and welcoming environment.
- The very good support for children with additional needs.
- The hard work and commitment of the nursery teacher and nursery team.

## **Other Issues**

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

A previous Care Commission inspection in January 2004 had made several recommendations regarding aspects of health and safety. Only a few recommendations had been fully addressed.

## **Recommendations for improvement**

- Staff should improve the quality of assessment information and use this to plan the next steps in children's learning effectively.
- Staff should improve the organisation of group activities to provide children with more opportunity to explore, question and discuss their ideas and experiences.
- The depute headteacher should implement more formal procedures for systematically and rigorously monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the nursery's work and children's progress in learning.

## **Requirements**

- Improve all aspects of health and safety as detailed in this report. SSI No 114 Regulation 10 Fitness of premises.

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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