

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

8 December 2004

**Chatelherault Primary School Nursery Class
Silvertonhill Avenue
Hamilton
ML3 7NT**

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

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.

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of the inspection or about this report you should write either to the Care Commission or to HM Inspectorate of Education at the address below. If you are still dissatisfied with our services, you can contact your member of the Scottish Parliament (or, if you prefer, any other MSP). You can also contact the Scottish Parliamentary Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and Agencies.

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Introduction

Chatelherault Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in June 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 children from age three to five. At the time of the inspection the roll was 60.

The environment

Standard 2

The good accommodation provided a safe, secure and stimulating environment. The playrooms were in a good state of decoration and repair. Children's work was displayed attractively. Staff had organised the playroom areas effectively so that children had space to play in groups and independently.

The facilities were clean and hygienic. However, there were no cleaning schedules in place which would help monitor the cleaning of equipment and furniture. Children had access to a safe outdoor area and a nature path which was part of the school campus.

The nursery children shared toilet facilities with P5.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff knew the children well and provided good quality care. They organised a suitable range of activities. Children were happy and familiar with the nursery routines. A good balance was struck each day between adult-directed activities and free play. Staff supported learning through working with individuals and groups. The recently-appointed nursery teacher was very skilled in extending children's play.

Overall, the curriculum was good. The annual plan gave adequate attention to each area of children's development and learning. However, weekly plans did not always indicate what children were expected to learn. Staff had recorded some observations of children in the nursery but these were not sufficient to help them to plan suitable activities for individuals and groups. Staff shared some information on children's progress with parents informally and through reports. The nursery provided information on children's progress to Chatelherault Primary School and to other schools.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children were at ease with one another and adults. Most played well together and were good at taking turns and sharing toys. Steps were being taken to improve the behaviour of some children. Most children had developed friendships in the nursery. Staff promoted good hygiene and healthy eating. Children helped staff to tidy up and carry out other tasks in nursery.
- The programme for communication and language was good. Children enjoyed the stories which were read by staff. The book corner in the quiet room was attractive and comfortable. Staff made good use of language when engaging with children and giving instructions. Some children were confident speakers. A number enjoyed extensive conversations on the climbing frame. Almost all children could recognise their names on printed labels. A number of children were keen on practising writing in imaginative play.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Staff made use of visits to the local environment to provide opportunities for children to explore living things. Children had enjoyed a particularly successful project on caterpillars and butterflies. Most children were adept at counting, recognising numbers, shapes and colours. Many were interested in using the computers. Staff should introduce more stimulating opportunities for children to explore, investigate and solve problems.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Children were introduced to a suitable range of media and techniques in art and craft. They enjoyed expressing their ideas with these materials. Children used the house area extensively in imaginative role-play. Staff should help to extend this play by providing dressing-up clothes in this area of the play room. Children had opportunities to sing in assemblies. They enjoyed making music individually with percussion instruments.
- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Children had good opportunities for energetic activities in the school gym twice each week and outside in the playground and on the soft play area. Children had well developed skills of jumping, balancing, throwing and catching. Staff encouraged the development of children's fine hand skills with pencils, crayons, paintbrushes and scissors.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

The longer-serving members of staff had a good knowledge of the children. However, the lack of stability in staffing and the high number of job sharers made it difficult for parents and staff to know each other well. Staff responded appropriately and sensitively to children's individual circumstances. Many parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were concerned about staffing and wanted more information on the progress and development of their children. The nursery should explore with parents how they can best provide this information.

The nursery had very good links with other professionals and they provided additional support for some children. Very good individualised educational programmes had been developed for children who had additional support needs. Good home language assessments and support in Punjabi and bilingual support in Cantonese were provided by a specialist.

Management

Standard 14

There were major weaknesses in the leadership of the nursery. Over the previous two years there had been significant changes of staff due to secondments and new appointments. The headteacher had delegated responsibilities for the nursery to successive depute and acting depute headteachers. This had caused a lack of continuity in leadership and support to the nursery staff. Since February, the new depute headteacher had met with staff on a weekly basis to help them to plan children's activities. She also assisted staff by monitoring plans and coordinating the work of specialist staff. The nursery teacher was getting to know the children and the routines and resources of the nursery.

Staff had access to relevant training courses but staff development opportunities were not focused on the needs of staff. The quality of work of each member of staff was not monitored. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures should be developed from the generic policies provided by the education authority and shared with staff and parents. The nursery handbook should include core policy statements and the aims and objectives of the service. Accident and incident recording systems should be reviewed.

Self-evaluation was unsatisfactory. Staff evaluated the planned activities informally but no use was made of any formal, systematic approaches which could have formed the basis of an improvement plan.

Key strengths

- The skilful interactions with the children of the nursery teacher and some other members of staff.
- The broad and well-balanced curriculum.
- The support provided to children with additional support needs and for whom English was an additional language.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

The nursery had successfully overtaken the Requirements and Recommendations arising from the previous inspection.

Recommendations for improvement

- Nursery staff should improve the assessment, recording and reporting of children's progress in each of the five areas of development and learning.
- Nursery staff should continue to improve communication between the nursery and parents.
- Senior managers should improve teamwork among nursery staff.
- The school, in collaboration with the education authority, should improve the leadership of the nursery.
- Senior managers should develop clear policies and procedures with staff and share them with parents.
- Senior managers should work with staff to introduce effective self-evaluation.

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

Terry Carr
HM Inspectorate of Education