

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Craigentinny Primary School
Nursery Class
City of Edinburgh Council**

31 August 2005

**Craigentenny Primary School Nursery Class
Loganlea
Edinburgh
EH7 6LR**

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.

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Introduction

Craigentinny Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in February 2005 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. The nursery catered for pre-school children aged three to five years. A wraparound service allowed parents to buy additional time for their child in school. At the time of the inspection the roll was 94.

The environment

Standard 2

There were two nursery classes within the primary school. Appropriate arrangements were in place to ensure that the entry and exit to the nursery classes were safe and secure. Each class had two playrooms, an outdoor area and toilets which were in a good state of repair. The separate outdoor areas had recently been upgraded. Staff had identified this as an area for development. Both groups accessed a soft play room and an additional room which staff used for children's music and movement and group work activities. These additional facilities enhanced children's learning experiences. Overall, the environment was in good repair. However, both classes were in need of decoration.

In one class, staff were reviewing the layout, including the use of resources, to make the area more attractive and appealing to children. In the other nursery class, staff provided a well-resourced, warm and welcoming environment for children. Both classes had sufficient space for children to work individually and in small groups. Appropriate health and safety assessments were undertaken.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff demonstrated a sound knowledge of children's development and learning. Almost all permanent staff knew children well and used praise effectively to develop their confidence and promote their self esteem. Most children were motivated and enthusiastic about their playroom activities. The majority of staff interacted well with children and made good use of questioning and discussion. However, a few had yet to develop skill in intervening purposefully and use questioning effectively in play, to extend children's learning and challenge their thinking.

Planning procedures were good and set out clearly what children were expected to learn. Management had identified the

importance of implementing joint planning with all nursery staff to offer consistency and continuity in children's experiences. Staff observed children's learning and kept appropriate notes. They had not made full use of assessment information to plan next steps in learning.

There was a good balance between free play and more adult-led activities. Children made choices and most were actively involved in all aspects of their learning. A few were less engaged and were not always appropriately supported and challenged through experiences which held their attention or excited their curiosity.

Parents had good opportunities, both formal and informal, to discuss their children with staff. Parents were involved through "All About Me" books which were shared between home and nursery. This appropriately involved parents in gathering information about their children's learning. Children's records were shared with parents, school staff and other agencies, when appropriate.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Staff had encouraged a warm, caring environment where children were valued. Children were happy and secure with nursery routines. They were learning simple hygiene rules, for example washing their hands before eating. Staff encouraged children to be independent by helping to prepare snack and tidying up afterwards. Some children did not have enough opportunities to concentrate and persevere in more difficult activities.
- The programme for communication and language was good. Staff provided a wide range of activities for children to develop early skills in reading and writing. They used children's names to help them identify sounds at the start and end of words. Some children made their own books and were able to send e-mails. Most enjoyed listening to stories and a few used the book corner independently. Most recognised their own name and a few could write it. Most children enjoyed talking and listening to staff and each other in play. However, some children had yet to develop skills in turn-taking in conversation and in talking and listening for a range of purposes.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Staff provided a good variety of activities for children to learn about their world. Some children showed interest in a display of frogs and lily pads. An attractive arrangement of dinosaurs in a setting of logs and branches, captured children's curiosity further. Children enjoyed making chocolate crispy cakes. They were learning about measuring using spoonfuls and about science through heating and melting ingredients. Children found out about other cultures when celebrating the festival of Chinese New Year. Most recognised colours and some could count and knew the names of shapes. Staff did not provide enough opportunities for children to explore, test out ideas and draw conclusions through simple science and mathematics activities.

- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Staff provided interesting and stimulating activities in music and movement. Children enjoyed singing songs to the accompaniment of the nursery teachers' guitar and piano playing. Children used percussion instruments independently and played with enthusiasm. Dramatic role-play in the home corner and construction area allowed children to develop their imagination and revisit experiences. Children had the opportunity to paint, make models and use glue. Staff did not always make the best use of art materials and tools to extend children's skill in using a variety of techniques to further express their ideas and feelings.
- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Children were developing good control of their fingers and hands using construction toys, puzzles and jigsaws. Staff accessed two separate rooms throughout the week for movement and music. They danced energetically and kept rhythm and beat to a range of music. Children enjoyed using the soft play area twice weekly. They were learning to balance, jump, roll, climb and slide. However, staff did not always use the outdoor play area to provide regular opportunities for energetic and physical play out-of-doors.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff worked effectively with parents and carers to provide good support for children. Staff had positive relationships with families and were sensitive to their needs. There were very good arrangements for the care of children over lunch time, with good healthy food choices being available. Parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were happy with the nursery. A few expressed a desire for more explanation of the nursery's work. Parents were kept well informed about the work of the nursery through regular newsletters, informal discussions and formal meetings to discuss children's progress. Families had good opportunities to be involved in their children's learning through the use of story sacks and 'Stanley Bear'. These activities supported parents in encouraging children to learn at home. Staff provided good opportunities for parents to be involved in baking, story telling and in taking an active part in the nursery.

Management had appropriately identified the need to review procedures to support children when they moved from nursery to P1. Staff had effective links with a range of support agencies, including a family learning worker and home visiting teacher, to help them meet children's needs. The support for learning assistant provided good support to those children who had additional needs. Some staff had not yet developed a clear knowledge and understanding of specific educational needs. The acting deputy headteacher had planned training to assist staff to develop individualised educational programmes and health care plans for children.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher had delegated responsibility for the nursery to the acting deputy headteacher who had a clear vision for the development of the nursery, including improved teamworking. Relationships with parents were effective. However, the management team needed to further develop their process for consulting parents and staff. Both the headteacher and deputy head were approachable and supportive of staff.

Appropriate records and effective policies were in place to support staff and guide the work of the nursery classes. Most staff had undertaken child protection training and appropriate child protection procedures were in place. A system for professional development and review was in place for all staff. Some staff were still to take part in this process. They had been informed of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the implications for the service.

The acting deputy headteacher had made a good start to monitoring by reviewing staff planning, visiting the nursery regularly and attending team meetings. However, she had yet to develop formal procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery classes. The management had plans to develop teamwork across both nursery classes and the sharing of resources to provide equal environments for children. However, these had not yet been implemented.

Key strengths

- Positive relationships between staff, parents and children.
- Motivation and enthusiasm of the children.
- Staff's effective links with external agencies to support children and families.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should make better use of information on children to plan their learning.
- Staff should develop their skills in intervening purposefully in children's play and in using questioning effectively to extend and challenge their learning.
- Staff should develop individualised educational programmes and health care plans to meet the needs of individual children, where needed.
- The headteacher and depute headteacher should improve teamwork across both nursery classes.
- The headteacher and depute headteacher, with the involvement of staff, should implement systems to monitor, evaluate and improve nursery practice, focusing initially on the quality of children's experiences.

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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