

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

8 June 2005

**Deanburn Primary School Nursery Class
Hazeldean Avenue
Bo'ness
EH51 0NS**

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

Deanburn 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. At the time of the inspection the roll was 59.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery class was located in the infant building of the existing primary school. A new school building was being constructed following fire damage. Recommendations from the previous inspection report to improve the nursery with a designated entrance and cloakroom area and secure, accessible toilet facilities had been met. This contributed to a safer environment and gave children more opportunities to be independent in personal care. There were plans to improve changing facilities when the new school was completed.

The kitchen area, which formed part of the main playroom, had not yet been safely enclosed and refurbished. Appropriate measures were taken to control the spread of infection. Play equipment was clean and well maintained.

The two playrooms offered bright, stimulating and spacious accommodation for the children. All areas of the nursery were well organised and allowed children to have the choice of playing independently or in small groups. Children had access to a large, enclosed outdoor area that was well used for energetic and physical play.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Relationships between staff and children were good. Staff were warm and caring towards children, who were enthusiastic and eager to learn. The overall structure and pace of the day was too formal. Staff did not provide an appropriate pace or balance of activities to ensure quality learning experiences for children. Children did not experience enough challenge and opportunities during investigation and exploration for free play. Staff interacted positively with children but did not make enough use of questions to extend and support their learning.

Long-, medium- and short-term planning was in place. Staff observed children regularly to record their progress. They had recently introduced personal learning plans to support individual children and had shared these appropriately with parents.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children were beginning to make friends and cooperate with each other. Most were happy and secure with nursery routines. A few children who had recently started nursery were well supported by nursery staff. Children had good opportunities at snack time to share and take turns. Staff did not promote children's overall independence enough or encourage their perseverance in general activities within the playroom.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Children were encouraged to share their own experiences with adults and each other. They listened well to instructions and enjoyed stories. A number of children could re-tell favourite stories by themselves. Staff provided good opportunities for children to learn early reading and writing skills throughout the nursery. They made effective use of notices on displays and scribed children's drawings. Most children recognised their names in print and others made good attempts to write their names by themselves. They eagerly used a notice board to display their own attempts at writing.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children had good opportunities to plant seeds and bulbs for the nursery garden. Staff provided good opportunities for them to explore and discuss the ice and snow outside. Children were learning to count and beginning to compare measurements for hats at the art table. They used the computer well for a shape game but had more limited opportunities to extend their knowledge about other technologies. Staff did not provide enough opportunities for children to go on visits outwith the nursery to learn about other environments and experiences.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Children played enthusiastically in the home corner and expressed their thoughts and feelings in creative dance and in role-play. Staff extended this learning very well by adding appropriate items for children to explore. Children had access to a well-resourced art and craft table and a few children were absorbed in making hats by themselves. They sang enthusiastically with staff and used instruments appropriately.
- The programme for physical, development and movement was good. Staff provided regular opportunities for children to play outside in the garden area. Children were confident in using wheeled toys and bikes. They also had opportunities for energetic activities in the school gym hall. However, staff needed to plan more effectively to ensure children had better opportunities to experience a wider range of activities to develop their physical skills. Children were learning good

control of their fingers and hands using a range of construction toys, games and puzzles.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had established positive relationships with children and their families. An effective key worker system was in operation which enabled each member of staff to know a small group of children well. Parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were generally satisfied with the work of the nursery. A number wanted more information about the work of the nursery in general and their own children's progress. Staff had made available a very brief nursery information leaflet for parents. This did not provide enough clear information on all aspects of the nursery. The headteacher had plans to improve these aspects by reviewing communication procedures with parents. She was organising curriculum evenings to give parents more information about their children and the work of the nursery in general.

Children requiring additional support for their learning were well supported. Additional staff were effectively assisting children with their learning. Good links were established with external agencies to help children and individualised learning programmes were in place. These were impacting well on assisting those children who needed help. Parents were fully consulted and involved through, for example, regular review meetings.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher was supported by the depute headteacher who had delegated responsibility for the nursery class. Both acknowledged that, due to the difficult circumstances of the main school's new building and recent staff changes, they now needed to improve a number of aspects of nursery provision. The depute headteacher spent time weekly in the nursery class. She had not yet started to formally review and evaluate nursery plans or to provide feedback to staff. Overall, leadership of the nursery was fair.

The recently appointed nursery teacher, supported by two early years officers, was ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of the nursery. The senior management team organised whole-school, team-building events, including nursery staff, to improve staff confidence and establish good relationships. As a result, nursery staff were beginning to define their roles and responsibilities to create a team approach to their work. The headteacher had not yet implemented a formal system for staff development and review for nursery staff. Staff accessed training courses and learning events linked to their development needs and nursery priorities.

Staff used a range of local authority and their own policies and procedures to guide their practice. These did not always accurately reflect nursery practice. All staff had been trained in child protection procedures and were aware of the policy and guidelines. The headteacher had very recently received information about the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice. She had not yet shared these with staff or discussed the implications for nursery practice.

The headteacher and depute had a constructive development plan in place which identified priorities for improvement. They had used some self-evaluation procedures to identify these. On account of staffing difficulties, nursery staff had not yet been significantly involved in reviewing nursery practice. The headteacher and depute headteacher were at a very early phase in developing systems to monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery.

Key strengths

- Safe, secure environment for children and the good outside play area.
- Warm, caring relationships between staff and children.
- Children's very good experiences in communication and language and expressive and aesthetic development.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

The school had taken action to address the two requirements made at the previous inspection. Progress had been made in response to some of the previous recommendations. The nursery brochure still needed to be further developed. Staff review and development procedures still needed to be implemented.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should improve the pace and balance of the session and give children more challenging opportunities for investigation and exploration during free play.
- Provide parents with more information about the nursery through reviewing current literature and establishing other systems of communication.
- Implement a system of staff development and review.
- The headteacher, with staff, should develop and implement a more rigorous system to monitor and evaluate practice to ensure the quality of 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.

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