

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

27 April 2005

**Drumbrae Primary School Nursery Class
Ardshiel Avenue
Edinburgh
EH4 7HP**

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 acting 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

Drumbrae Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in December 2004 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 28.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery area formed an integral part of the primary school. It comprised of a large room with a kitchen area and a separate room used for individual work and group activity. The rooms were bright, airy and freshly decorated. However, there were insufficient displays of children's work. A wide range of resources was available and created a stimulating environment. Staff needed to improve the layout of the room to increase children's access and movement. The entrance hall was cosy and attractive for parents, and useful information was displayed and placed in children's trays. Parents were welcomed into the nursery room when dropping off and collecting children. However, the safety of children was compromised by a faulty front door catch and a small section of hot pipe which was exposed.

There was a good, well-used outdoor area including grass, tarmac, and soft surfaces. A wide range of outdoor resources was available. Staff planned to extend the planting areas to provide further choice for children.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had created a caring and purposeful learning environment. They knew children well and had formed very good relationships with them. They used praise and encouragement effectively to develop children's confidence and self esteem. Staff interacted positively to support children's development. Children were interested, involved and cooperated well in play. Staff should make more use of questioning to extend children's learning.

Staff planned a broad and balanced range of themed experiences for children. They took good account of children's interests. Staff had identified the need to improve planning. Their plans needed to show more clearly what children were expected to learn. Staff made regular observations of children. A key worker system, where staff had responsibility for small groups of children,

ensured efficient recording of observations in individual children's profiles. Staff needed to make more use of this information in planning. They also compiled useful folios of children's work. Parents had good opportunities to discuss their children's progress with staff and received annual written reports.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme in emotional, personal and social development was good. Staff effectively promoted children's positive behaviour and awareness of the needs of others. Children were developing friendships and were able to share and take turns. They were secure and comfortable in nursery routines. Children followed hygiene rules well at snack and were familiar with safety rules when using tools. Staff should extend children's opportunities to take simple responsibilities and further develop their independence.
- The programme in communication and language was good. Staff provided a wide range of appropriate activities for listening and talking. Children were attentive to instructions from staff and talked well in a group. Staff effectively encouraged children's interest in books through regular story telling sessions, using taped stories, displays and books. The location of the story area should be reviewed to reduce distractions and to encourage children to use the area independently. Staff effectively increased children's awareness of rhyme. Children used name labels for art and a drawing area capably. Staff needed to provide more opportunities in play to develop children's early reading and writing skills.
- The programme in knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children enjoyed useful outings to the local post office, shop and woodlands to increase their awareness of the environment. Visitors to the nursery included a dental hygienist and an animal company to extend children's experiences. Staff were successfully developing children's knowledge of seasons, weather, planting and a range of cultures. Children were learning about size, shape and number using a computer game and magnetic numbers. They explored a range of materials such as glitter, sand, ice and magnets. Staff should provide more opportunities for children to investigate technology and undertake simple experiments.
- The programme in expressive and aesthetic development was good. Staff provided a wide range of activities for children to listen and respond to music. Children explored musical instruments independently and enjoyed singing and music and movement games in a group. They used an imaginative home corner and dressing-up clothes well for role-play. Staff needed to make more use of imaginative play to develop early literacy and numeracy. Children took part in a good range of regular art activities such as painting, modelling and collage. However, these tended to be adult led. Staff should improve children's independent access to materials and further encourage their creativity.
- The programme in physical development and movement was good. Children enjoyed regular energetic activities in the outdoor area. A good range of equipment promoted the

development of skills such as running, riding, balancing, throwing and catching. The nursery had timetabled use of the school gym for further active play. Children were developing coordination skills and an awareness of space. Staff should further ensure children's access to larger equipment. Children were developing good hand control using construction materials, puzzles, brushes and pencils.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

There was good support for children and families. Management and staff had established very positive relationships with children and parents. They were responsive, caring and sensitive to meet differing needs and circumstances. Parents received information about the nursery through the handbook, newsletters, notice board and individual communication boxes. The nursery had recently introduced a lending library which parents organised. Parents also helped on outings and with fund-raising. Those who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with most aspects of the nursery. A few wanted more opportunities to work in partnership and receive more information about the nursery and their children's progress. Staff should extend the key workers' role and further develop home/school links.

There were good transition arrangements in place. Visits to the nursery, prior to children starting, and a flexible settling-in process helped children adjust to the new setting. The nursery should develop further links with local early years' provision to ensure continuity for children. There were useful documented procedures to support children transferring to P1. Children made visits to the P1 classroom and playground and were visited by the P1 teacher. P6 pupils acted as helpers for the new pupils. Parents' meetings and good contact with other local schools also eased children's transfer to primary. The nursery had good links with a range of other agencies involved with children requiring additional support in their learning. Information was shared with parents, staff and other agencies at regular review meetings. Individual learning plans were in place to support children's development.

Management

Standard 14

The responsibility for the management of the nursery was temporarily being undertaken by the principal teacher as acting headteacher. She had adapted well to her new and recent responsibility and demonstrated firm commitment to the nursery. She monitored plans and was fully involved in developments and events. She was approachable and supportive of staff. There was good communication between the acting headteacher, nursery teacher and staff.

The nursery teacher had day-to-day responsibility for the organisation of the nursery and led staff well. Staff worked effectively as a team. They undertook appropriate training to develop their skills. A good range of policies and procedures was available and staff were aware of their role in protecting children. However, there was no curriculum policy covering the key aspects of children's learning and development. The inspection process was used to raise the acting headteacher's awareness of

the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice, a copy of which had still to reach the nursery.

A development plan was progressing to improve aspects of provision. However, audit procedures to identify priorities were limited and did not sufficiently involve nursery staff. Self-evaluation was at an early stage and now needed to be developed with staff to include more formal and systematic monitoring of all aspects of the work of the nursery.

Key strengths

- Children's interest, involvement and cooperation in the welcoming, caring and purposeful learning environment.
- The very good relationships established between staff and children and parents.
- The overall structure of the curriculum.
- The well-organised and documented arrangements for children transferring to primary.
- The very positive working relations and communications between the acting headteacher, nursery teacher and staff.
- The effective teamwork of nursery staff.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

One of the recommendations from the last inspection had been implemented. One other recommendation in relation to the heating pipes had been partially implemented.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should develop and implement a curriculum policy covering the five key aspects of children's development and learning.
- Management and staff should improve planning to more clearly show what children are expected to learn.
- The acting headteacher and staff should further develop home/school links and contact with local early years' provision.
- The acting headteacher and staff should further develop self-evaluation procedures.

Requirements

- It is a requirement that the education authority and headteacher improve the safety of the heating pipes in the nursery to comply with regulation 4(1)(a) of the Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002.

This should be achieved within 3 months of the date of this report.

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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