

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

18 April 2007

**Dunipace Primary School Nursery Class
Thistle Avenue
Dunipace
FK6 6LS**

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

If you would like an additional copy of this report

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.

If you wish to comment about integrated pre-school inspections

Should you wish to comment on any aspect of integrated pre-school inspections, you should write in the first instance to Kenneth Muir, HMCI, at HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Our complaints procedure

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to either:

Complaints Coordinator	Hazel Dewart
Headquarters	HM Inspectorate of Education
Care Commission	Denholm House
Compass House	Almondvale Business Park
Riverside Drive	Almondvale Way
Dundee	Livingston
DD1 4NY	EH54 6GA

If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330 (fax 0800 377 7331) or e-mail ask@spsso.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.spsso.org.uk.

A copy of the HMIE complaints procedure is available from the HMIE website at www.hmie.gov.uk or by telephoning 01506 600 258.

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Introduction

Dunipace Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in January 2007 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. HMIE carried out the inspection on behalf of both organisations and consulted the Care Commission about its findings. The nursery catered for pre-school children aged three to five years. It was registered for 30 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 34.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery was accommodated within an extension to the primary school and consisted of a self-contained unit with reception area, large playroom, toilets and kitchen. The accommodation was bright and welcoming. Staff had created attractive displays of children's work throughout as well as interesting, low-level displays that children could explore and investigate. The nursery had its own fully-enclosed outdoor area that staff were continuing to develop into a stimulating learning environment for children. Children also had regular use of the school gym hall for indoor energetic physical activity.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff knew children very well and were responsive to their individual needs. They valued children's efforts and contributions and praised them appropriately to develop their confidence and self esteem. Children were enthusiastic and able to make choices. Staff made very effective use of dialogue, discussion and questioning to develop children's ideas and encourage them to think for themselves.

Daily activities were very well organised and flexible enough to meet children's needs and develop their interests. Staff involved children in planning their own activities and shared plans with parents. Staff observed children at their play activities and noted their responses. They used this information very effectively to compile an early years learning profile for each child and to identify areas for children's development. Parents received helpful reports on their children's progress shortly after settling into nursery and at the end of the session. They had additional opportunities to meet with staff informally and at a parents' evening and open day.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were secure, cheerful and confidently chose activities by themselves. They had settled well into nursery routines and were comfortable with simple rules. Staff made very good use of praise to promote children's confidence and self esteem and encouraged them to persevere with tasks. They provided very good opportunities for children to share resources and play cooperatively. Children concentrated very well at their chosen activities and at group times. They were encouraged to take responsibility for a variety of tasks such as personal hygiene and putting on coats and shoes for outdoor play. Staff also encouraged children to assist in setting the table for snack and tidying up around the playroom. Children were becoming aware of the needs of others and were beginning to develop friendships.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Children were confident when talking and listening to adults and to one another. They had effective opportunities to verbally plan and review their play experiences. Staff encouraged children to ask questions and use language to predict and describe events and experiences. They used a good variety of signs and labels around the playrooms to help children make the link between the spoken and the written word. Staff provided a very good range of writing tools and materials to encourage children's interest in early writing. Children could recognise their own name in print and had opportunities to write it. Staff had created an attractive and well-resourced book area where children could read books for pleasure and to find information. Staff had used books effectively around the playroom to support children's interests in a range of topics. Children enjoyed regular visits to the local library.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Staff planned a range of interesting topics throughout the year. Children enjoyed outings in the local community, and local people such as the community police and road safety officer were regular visitors. Children had effective opportunities to learn about their own and other people's cultures through the celebration of a variety of festivals. They were developing simple science and investigative skills using a wide range of materials including water, sand and play dough and through baking activities. Staff encouraged children to develop their observation skills both in the playroom and outdoors. There were good opportunities for children to use a range of everyday technology. Children were developing early skills in recognising colours, shapes and numbers. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to understand simple mathematical processes such as counting, sorting, matching and measuring.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Staff provided a very good range of materials for children to express themselves imaginatively and creatively. Children benefited from well-planned opportunities to make models, to print, to paint and to create

drawings on the smart board. They enjoyed gluing and sticking and planned their collage and self-selected materials. Staff supported children very well to use these materials freely and creatively. Children enjoyed imaginative role-play in the house corner. Staff had created an attractive music area where children could explore and investigate the sounds that different instruments made. Children enjoyed listening to Scottish music and were learning Scottish dancing. They sang along with music and knew a range of songs and rhymes.

- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Staff were continuing to develop activities to provide a range of physical play experiences to challenge children and to encourage them to explore what their bodies were able to do. They were improving the equipment available for children to extend and progress children's physical skills. They made good use of the school gym and children were developing ball skills. They were able to run, jump, hop and skip and use a range of wheeled toys outdoors. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to develop their hand and finger control through the use of scissors, writing tools, the smart board, computer, puzzles and construction toys. Staff encouraged children to taste a variety of healthy foods and talked to children about how to keep themselves fit.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

The headteacher and staff had created a happy, caring environment with a strong inclusive ethos where children and parents were very welcome. They worked effectively with families to provide very good support to children. Parents were encouraged to support the nursery and to participate in their children's development and learning both within the playroom and at home. Staff kept parents informed about the work of the nursery through the notice board, helpful newsletters and the handbook. The majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very happy with the nursery. However, a few wanted more information about their children's development and progress.

The nursery had a well-planned programme of induction for children moving into primary school. Relationships between nursery staff and staff in the infant department were very good. The transition document provided very useful information for the P1 teacher. The nursery was very well integrated into the school and children were familiar with the school environment. Staff had formed effective links with professional agencies involved in supporting children with additional needs. Individualised educational programmes and coordinated support plans were in place with appropriate short- and longer-term targets. These were reviewed on a regular basis.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher provided very good leadership. She was very ably supported by the principal teacher who had responsibility for the nursery. They had established very good relationships with children, staff and parents. Both were supportive, open,

approachable and enthusiastic about the nursery provision as an integral part of the school. The principal teacher fostered very good team work between the nursery teacher and the early years practitioners.

Child protection guidelines were followed appropriately and staff were aware of their responsibilities in protecting children. Staff were highly motivated and committed to the further development of the nursery. An effective system of staff development and review identified and addressed staff training needs. Staff were familiar with the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the registration process.

An annual audit of all aspects of the provision carried out by the headteacher, principal teacher and staff identified priorities for improvement which were successfully being taken forward. Parental questionnaires also informed the agenda for improvement. The principal teacher had developed very effective systems for formally monitoring and evaluating the quality of children's experiences and practice within the playroom.

Key strengths

- The caring and supportive learning environment created by the staff team.
- The very good quality of relationships and interactions between staff and children.
- The four very good programmes.
- The very good support provided to children with additional needs.
- The very effective support provided to the nursery staff by the principal teacher.
- The very good leadership of the head teacher.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

At the last Care Commission singleton inspection there was one recommendation and three requirements that had been addressed satisfactorily.

Recommendations for improvement

- The manager and staff should continue to maintain the very good quality of experiences provided for children by the nursery.

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.

Hilary Long
HM Inspectorate of Education