

**Inchlair Nursery School
Stenhousemuir
FK5 3BY
Falkirk Council
23 January 2008**

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 4 – Engaging With Children Standard 5 – Quality of Experience	Staff/child interaction Structure of the curriculum Children’s progress and development and learning through play
Standard 6 – Support and Development	Meeting children’s needs and care routines Partnership with parents
Standard 14 – Well-managed Service	Leadership and Self-evaluation

Evaluations made using HMIE quality indicators use the following scale, and these words are used in the report to describe the team’s judgements:

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths, some areas for improvement
adequate	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	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.

Introduction

Inchlair Nursery School was inspected in October 2007 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. It was registered for 80 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 99.

Key strengths

- The very effective relationships and partnerships with parents.
- Support given to children who require additional help with their learning and their families.
- The challenging and stimulating learning experiences offered to children.
- The effectiveness of the headteacher and the commitment of the staff team.

How good is the quality of children's experience?

Standard 4 & 5

Staff were caring and approachable and had developed very good relationships with children. They were supportive of individual children and interacted effectively with them. They used praise appropriately to celebrate children's achievements. Staff were skilled in their use of questioning and dialogue to support and extend children's learning. They consulted with children and valued their contributions. Children were able to choose freely from a wide range of stimulating and challenging activities and resources indoors and outside. Overall, the structure of the curriculum was very good and children were making very good progress across nearly all aspects of the curriculum.

Children were confident and settled well to activities. They were motivated, eager to learn and enthusiastic. They were developing very good independent skills and persevered well at activities. Most children shared resources and took turns. They enjoyed healthy snacks such as vegetables and fruit. Children were learning about care of their environment through a wide variety

of experiences such as planting and recycling. Staff and children had obtained a silver ECO school award in recognition of their work in caring for the environment and were working towards their green flag. Many children were problem solving when playing in the water, using tubes and funnels and they were investigating leaves and fruit. They were keen to use the computer and were developing appropriate skills. Children had been learning about different cultures through sponsorship of a child from Malawi. They enjoyed extended role-play in the 'house' and 'fire station' and acted out a variety of roles. A few explored a variety of art and craft activities freely and creatively. Children had access to a wide range of musical instruments and enjoyed exploring sound when using a musical programme on the smart board. They sang enthusiastically. Staff made very good use of the outside area to enhance the quality experiences for all children. Most children were confident on large apparatus and gaining skills in climbing, balancing, running and using wheeled toys. They were developing good control of their hands and fingers, using a wide range of materials.

Most children were making very good progress in communication and language. Staff promoted early literacy and mark making through a wide variety of play situations. Most children could recognise their name in print and a few were developing an awareness of letter sounds. Most children listened very attentively and confidently contributed to discussions. They used language well to explain and to express their ideas and opinions. They enjoyed listening to stories and some used the book area independently to look at favourite books. Most children were making good progress in their understanding of early mathematics. They were well supported by staff to solve simple problems when playing. They had a good understanding of sorting, matching and counting. Most children could recognise simple shapes and a few were able to count to ten and above. They knew a range of counting songs and rhymes. Many children used appropriate mathematical language in play. However, there was scope to further develop mathematical understanding in play situations.

How well are children supported?

Standard 6

Staff had created a very caring, happy and supportive ethos where children and parents were very welcome. They responded very appropriately and sensitively to individual needs. All children were treated with equal concern. Although children's care routines were effective, overall, there was a lack of appropriate changing facilities. Staff met the needs of all children well. They worked closely together to share observation and assessment information to

ensure children's individual needs were met. This information was shared regularly with parents through regular 'parents as partner' meetings, access to children's profiles and more formal opportunities to discuss their children's progress. Some parents helped regularly in the nursery and staff supported parents in this role. Staff kept parents very well informed about the life of the nursery through regular newsletters and detailed notice boards. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and those spoken to on the day of the inspection, praised all aspects of the provision.

Staff had an appropriate programme to support children as they moved on to primary school. Nursery and primary staff had opportunities to meet, and detailed information on each child's progress was exchanged. Staff and the support assistant met the needs of children who required additional help with their learning well. There were well-established systems in place to support the needs of individual children. Individualised learning plans were in place and staff worked closely with parents and a wide range of support agencies.

Leading and improving the centre

Standard 14

The head of service offered very good leadership. She was a supportive leader, strongly committed to supporting the needs of individual families and children and developing the staff team. She spent time within the playroom to offer assistance and support. She valued her staff highly and had established positive relationships with staff, children and parents over a period of time. She was ably supported by the staff team. Together, they carried out their responsibilities very effectively and had a sound understanding of children's development and learning. The hardworking staff team worked well together and were committed to the continued development of the nursery. They enthusiastically took responsibility in taking forward new initiatives to help develop the service.

An effective system for professional development and review helped identify and address staff training needs. Staff were committed to attending appropriate training to develop further their skills in early education. Child protection guidelines and procedures were appropriate and staff were aware of their duties in keeping children safe. All staff were familiar with the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and their implications.

The nursery's arrangements for evaluating its work were good. Views of parents had been sought through questionnaires, and an audit of the provision had been carried out by staff. Information gathered was used to identify key priorities for improvement and these were being taken forward successfully. The head of service had recently begun to put systems in place to formally monitor staff practice and the work of the nursery.

Issues from previous inspections

Response to recommendations or to requirements or enforcement action made at previous inspection.

There was one requirement and six recommendations identified at the last Care Commission singleton inspection. The requirement and two of the recommendations had been met in full. Two recommendations relating to inspection of Falkirk Council as a provider were currently being addressed. One recommendation regarding the changing of children was still outstanding. One recommendation regarding tooth brushing had been partly addressed.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should continue to improve early maths experiences.
- Management and staff should further improve monitoring and evaluation of the service as planned.

The centre and the education authority have been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents. Within two years of the publication of this report parents will be informed about the progress made by the centre.

Christine Dow
HM Inspectorate of Education

Pat Bunyan
Care Commission

HOW TO CONTACT US

If you would like an additional copy of this report

Copies of this report have been sent to the head of centre, 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 any aspect of 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.

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

Complaints Coordinator
Headquarters
Care Commission
Compass House
Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

Complaints Manager
HMIE Business Management and
Communications Team
HM Inspectorate of Education
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

You can also e-mail HMIEComplaints@hmie.gsi.gov.uk. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office, by telephoning 01506 600200 or from our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

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 (SPSO). The SPSO is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to the SPSO, 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.

Crown Copyright 2008
HM Inspectorate of Education

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.