

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Inverloch Primary School
Nursery Class
The Highland Council**

15 June 2005

**Inverlochry Primary School Nursery Class
Earl of Inverness Road
Inverlochry
Fort William
PH33 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

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

Inverloch Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in March 2005 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. An inspection of the primary school was carried out at the same time by HMIE and is the subject of a separate report. The nursery catered for pre-school children aged three to five years. At the time of the inspection the roll was 26.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery classes were located within purpose-built premises in the grounds of the primary school. The nursery provided a bright, comfortable and stimulating environment. Staff had organised attractive displays of the children's work in the play room. Useful information for parents and carers was displayed in the entrance hall. Appropriate security measures were in place to ensure children's safety. However, written guidance relating to arrival and departure procedures had yet to be provided for parents and carers.

Space was used effectively to provide opportunities for children to play on their own or in small groups. There was an extensive range of play resources suitable for the needs of the children. A dedicated, secure outdoor play area was accessible from the main play room. Large physical equipment was stored some distance from the outdoor play area. Staff needed to consider how to make these resources more accessible to children. Children had timetabled use of the school gymnasium which provided good opportunities for indoor physical play. Children also had use of the school's computer suite.

Resources were well maintained and measures were in place to control the spread of infection. A more systematic format for recording the cleaning of equipment needed to be implemented. Infection control measures and procedures needed to be introduced and information shared with parents and carers in the nursery handbook.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had developed very good relationships with children. They provided a warm and caring learning environment where children were well behaved and responded well to simple rules. Staff

interacted very effectively with children. Staff made very good use of questioning to support and extend children's learning. They ensured that activities and resources were prepared and set out appropriately. However, as children moved from one activity to another, they were not always purposefully engaged in play.

Staff planned learning carefully, taking children's interests and views into account in their daily planning. Staff made observations of children during play and recorded their progress. Staff had identified the need to review the recording format of observations to make the system more effective and manageable. Parents received helpful written reports annually and had opportunities for regular, informal discussions about their children's progress.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Staff used praise and encouragement to build children's self esteem and reward children's efforts. Children took responsibility for helping with snack and nursery routines. For example, children's daily duties as snack helper included decorating the table with flowers and music boxes. They demonstrated independence in hand washing, brushing teeth and selecting and replacing equipment. Children had made firm friendships with each other and were able to cooperate and share.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to talk in groups and listen to stories. They enjoyed discussing pictures and predicting what would happen next. They took turns in discussion and talked readily about their own experiences. They joined in selecting and creating rhyming words and patterns. Children were able to recognise their own name in print and some could write it. A few were able to identify the name and sound of letters. They drew pictures and made early writing marks on paper in a variety of play settings.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children readily took part in a range of experiences including hospital play. Children visited the local hospital, an ambulance bay and had a visit from a parent who was a nurse. They used their senses to smell and taste a variety of vegetables in a pizza-baking activity. Their attention was drawn to the changing seasons through a display of spring daffodils. Festivals were celebrated through music and dance and a visit from a dance specialist. Staff focused children's interest on counting, number and shape when singing songs and playing games. Staff had yet to provide sufficient opportunities for children to test things out, draw conclusions and solve simple problems in science and maths.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Staff provided a variety of opportunities for children to invent and use their imagination in hospital role-play. Children played percussion instruments with enthusiasm, independently and in groups. They had opportunities to use glue and different objects to create

pictures. Children had very good experiences in expressing their ideas and feelings using paint. They joined in singing songs and listening to music. Opportunities to experience a range of art materials and to choose from a wide selection of tools and art resources would help broaden children's skills in art.

- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Staff provided daily opportunities for children to experience energetic physical play indoors, including the use of wheeled toys. Staff used the school hall weekly to provide a range of movement activities. An outdoor play area offered additional play experiences out-of-doors. However, access to the large-scale physical equipment was difficult. Staff provided children with opportunities to develop control of their fingers and hands through play with jigsaws, writing tools, small world toys and scissors. Most children used these resources well.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had developed very good relationships with children and their families. They were sensitive and responsive in their approach and offered good support to meet their differing needs. The nursery provided useful information for parents through the handbook, notice boards, displays, newsletters and health and community leaflets. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with most aspects of the nursery's work. A few wanted more opportunities to discuss their children's learning and progress.

Staff encouraged parents to be involved in the life of the nursery through outings, fund raising, and using parents' expertise in supporting playroom activities. Parents were encouraged to be involved in their children's learning at home through the use of "Early Learning Packs" and curriculum workshops throughout the school year.

Staff worked well with a range of external services, when necessary, to support children with additional needs.

A well-planned programme of induction for children moving to the primary school was in place. 'Next steps' records were shared with parents and primary staff at the point of transition. A P6 buddy system helped to make the move to primary school easier for nursery children.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher provided good leadership. She displayed a high level of professional competence and commitment to the future development of the nursery. She had a wide knowledge of the community and families and had formed sound relationships with them. Parents expressed confidence in the headteacher and nursery staff and they found them to be approachable and helpful.

The nursery team, including the nursery coordinator teacher, were hard working and committed to ensuring the effective running of the nursery and its daily routine. The nursery coordinator teacher carried out her responsibilities well. She provided an additional link between nursery staff and the headteacher. Together, the headteacher and the nursery staff needed to develop closer partnership working, to help create a more cohesive school team.

An appropriate appraisal system had been developed. All nursery staff would benefit from the opportunity to participate in this process. Staff had accessed a number of staff development opportunities suited to the needs of the nursery. Staff were clear about procedures for child protection.

The nursery had a good range of policies and procedures in place. However, the procedures for recording accidents and incidents needed to be reviewed and improved.

The headteacher made informal monitoring visits to the nursery. More formal, evidence-based procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the nursery's provision had yet to be implemented. The school development plan was in place and contained priorities for improvement. Parents' and nursery children's' views had yet to be formally included in the evaluation process.

Key strengths

- The purpose-built nursery accommodation providing a warm, welcoming environment for parents and children.
- The very good interaction between staff and children.
- The very good programmes in emotional, personal and social development and communication and language.
- The very good support offered to children and their families.

Recommendations for improvement

- The nursery staff should review the recording format of observations, to make the system more effective and manageable.
- The headteacher should implement more formal, evidence-based procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the nursery's provision.

- The headteacher should extend staff appraisal systems to include all nursery staff.
- The headteacher should differentiate accident and incident recording procedures, to clearly distinguish one from the other and to include a parental signature.
- The headteacher should introduce infection control measures and procedures and share information with parents and carers in the nursery handbook.

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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