

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

3 May 2006

Keith Primary School Nursery Class
School Road
Keith
AB55 5GS

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 can write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, 4-6 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NS. You can also telephone 0870 011 5378 or e-mail enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.scottishombudsman.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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Care Commission
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Introduction

Keith Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in January 2006 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 40 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 67.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery, which was accommodated in a classroom within Keith Primary School, offered a safe, secure and welcoming environment for children. The premises comprised of one very large, self-contained playroom with adjoining cloakroom facilities. Toilets were located a short distance along the corridor. The nursery had its own separate entrance with a secured entry system. The building was generally in a good state of repair and decoration. The accommodation was attractively decorated with children's work and photographs.

Staff implemented good hygiene practices and carried out daily risk assessments of the premises. Although the cloakroom area was limited in space, staff had organised an effective system which ensured congestion in this area was minimal.

The nursery was equipped to a very high standard and resources and activities were easily accessible to the children. Staff had made very good use of the space to enable children to play together in small or larger groups, or independently. The staff and children had timetabled access to the gym hall on a daily basis. The nursery had access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and a wide range of outdoor equipment was available.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff provided a broad range of activities to meet the needs of children. They gave children good opportunities to express their opinions and ideas. Children were highly motivated and concentrated well on completing tasks such as sorting activities. Staff intervened gently to promote positive behaviour. They were responsive to children's needs. Some staff did not use questioning consistently to extend children's learning and to challenge a few children. Children's interests were taken into account and used to influence the programme.

Staff had good systems for planning and set out clearly what they expected children to learn. They evaluated their planning in

detail and adapted activities to take account of children's interests. Staff knew children very well and made helpful observations, which key workers recorded. They needed to make more effective use of their observations to identify individual needs of some children in the learning process and share this more effectively with parents.

Detailed records of children's progress were shared with the receiving P1 teacher and parents at the end of the school year.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for children's emotional, personal and social development was very good. Staff had created a happy and purposeful learning environment. They made very effective use of praise and encouragement to promote children's self esteem. Children were confident and enthusiastic. They were responsible and independent when tidying or changing. They had very positive relationships with adults, cooperated well with other children and were developing friendships. Children knew the nursery routines and rules. They were well behaved and were considerate of others.
- The programme for children's communication and language development was very good. Children talked very readily to one another and to adults. They listened well for instructions and information. Children enjoyed listening to stories and had good opportunities to re-tell stories through role-play including well-known fairy stories. Staff had developed a helpful book lending system for parents to promote children's interest in reading. Children handled books very well in the book corner. Staff made good use of signs and labels. Children were developing very good writing skills. Most children wrote their own names and a few children were writing words and messages.
- The programme for children's knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children's experiences in early mathematics were very good. They were able to take part in a range of sorting and matching activities. Children were learning about the seasons through seasonal themes. They provided opportunities for children to learn about other cultures. Children explored and investigated situations, for example the oats in the sand tray. They used computers well. Staff should further develop the use of information and communications technology (ICT) as planned. Children did not have sufficient opportunities to explore the outdoor environment.
- The programme for children's expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Children had very good opportunities to create and express their thoughts and feelings through a range of art activities and materials. There was a good balance between adult-led activities and those children could choose for themselves. Children explored textures through collage work. Children's role-play was highly imaginative. Role-play was well used by some children and they invented good stories about "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." Children had opportunities to make music. Visitors who played instruments visited the nursery to

play for the children. Children's individual talents were encouraged and recognised by staff.

- The programme for children's physical development and movement was good. Children had daily opportunities to enjoy physical activity in the hall. Some children were using their bodies to express their ideas of animal movements. They were learning about safe practices in physical play. Children had limited access to outdoor play. Staff needed to consider ways of giving children more regular, energetic outdoor experiences. Children had very good opportunities to develop control of fingers through the use of pens and the computer mouse. A few children were attempting to tie their own shoe laces.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had established positive relationships with parents and carers. They were successfully developing their knowledge of children and building relationships with their families. Overall, they offered good support. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied with almost all aspects of the nursery. However, some were concerned about the increase in class size and felt they weren't getting enough information on their child's progress.

Staff made every effort to keep parents informed through informal discussions, formal meetings, regular newsletters and general information which was displayed on the notice board. Parents were encouraged to become involved in the life of the nursery and successfully operated the lending library each week. Parents had also contributed to music activities and new parents with babies had brought in siblings to the group. Most children moved into the P1 class within Keith Primary School and liaison was good. Children became familiar with the school facilities and were able to meet staff. The children also had the opportunity to take part in a structured play session in the playground along with older children. The headteacher was also a regular visitor to the nursery.

Support staff worked effectively with those children who required extra support in their learning and development. Staff worked well with a range of professional agencies who provided practical support and advice to meet the children's needs. All children with additional support needs had individualised educational programmes and plans to support their needs.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher and nursery teacher worked together and shared the overall management responsibilities of the nursery. Together, they provided very good leadership. The nursery teacher had a clear understanding of her role and was strongly committed to the nursery, approachable and well respected by staff and parents. She led the team very well, supporting staff and promoting good teamwork. Effective staff appraisals were carried out which staff found helpful and supportive.

There was a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place providing useful guidance for staff and parents. These

were available in information folders accessible to parents on a daily basis. Staff were recruited in line with local authority procedures and held appropriate qualifications. All staff were clearly committed to attending further training courses and were supported by the headteacher. They all had been trained on child protection policy and procedures and they followed appropriate guidelines. Staff were aware of the role of the Scottish Social Services Council and the registration process. They had all been issued with a copy of the Codes of Practice.

The headteacher and nursery teacher had used self-evaluation procedures to audit the nursery provision and identify priorities. They needed to further develop and formalise procedures in line with national and local guidelines. They should introduce a more systematic and rigorous approach to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the nursery's work.

Key strengths

- The bright, safe, secure environment.
- The breadth and quality of the curriculum and very good experiences for children.
- The high-quality support for children with additional needs.
- The leadership and support of the headteacher and the willingness of staff to undertake good training opportunities to extend their knowledge and expertise.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should further improve their use of questioning to extend children's learning.
- Staff should further identify children's individual needs in learning and share this with parents.
- The headteacher, together with the nursery staff, should further develop procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of 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.

Margaret Irons
Care Commission

Gail Simcox
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