

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

14 June 2006

**Killearn Primary School Nursery Class
Crosshead Road
Killearn
G63 9RN**

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 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.

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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Introduction

Killearn Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in March 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 those not yet attending primary school. It was registered for 20 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 47.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery class was situated in a portakabin within the grounds of Killearn Primary School. The playroom was bright, clean and stimulating. Staff provided parents with good information about the range of activities within the centre. This was clearly presented in the entrance foyer using notice boards and a laptop presentation of photographs of children in play. Children's work was attractively displayed to enhance the playroom and acknowledge children's successes.

Staff had organised space effectively, enabling children to work independently and to play in small or in larger groups. The enclosed outdoor area provided additional play facilities for children, focusing in particular on exploration of the natural world.

Staff ensured play equipment was well maintained. Staff had a good understanding of relevant health and safety legislation. All required records were in place.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had very good relationships with children and welcomed them individually on arrival at nursery. They knew children well and made effective use of praise to develop their confidence and self esteem. Children made appropriate choices about their own learning and decided on the activities they wished to follow. Staff interacted positively with children but did not always use questions effectively enough to extend more able children's thinking. Staff did not provide challenging enough opportunities for younger children to explore, investigate and learn. Activities for the younger age group were not always sufficiently differentiated to match their development needs.

An appropriate system for planning was in place. However, staff did not yet focus planning clearly enough on what children were expected to learn. Aspects of assessment and recording were currently being developed. Staff observed children at times, but

did not yet use this information sufficiently well to plan next steps for individuals and smaller groups. Staff shared information with parents about their children's progress informally at the end of the session and more formally at planned interviews twice yearly. A useful file to record children's achievements was maintained by staff and shared with parents.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were happy and secure with nursery routines. They were developing close friendships and shared interests. Staff effectively encouraged children to develop positive relationships by caring for each other, cooperating and taking turns. Children were independent in hand washing and accessing their own snack. They took responsibility for putting on their coats and shoes and tidying away toys. Children were encouraged to make decisions during their play and staff used a simple voting system to consult them on the selection of playroom resources.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Children spoke confidently to adults and each other and were keen to initiate conversation and share their own experiences. They listened well to stories and used the story corner at times to look at books. Staff wrote down children's conversations and made good use of these when supporting children to make their own stories to accompany their drawings. They made very effective use of labels on pictures and print on displays to develop children's early reading skills. Children were developing their early writing skills through frequent access to a well-resourced writing area. A number of children wrote their name correctly and were interested in adding words to their pictures. Some children were developing an awareness of rhyming words in familiar songs.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Children enjoyed digging and exploring in the outdoor garden area when searching for buried treasure. They used home made maps and the language of direction such as north, south, east to locate the exact position. Staff used the digital camera to record their findings. Children recalled previous activities when they had planted vegetables. They had observed their growth and had been learning to care for and harvest the vegetables. Children effectively extended their number skills through a good range of activities including games and suitable computer programmes. An attractive display of bird pictures and a set of binoculars for observing the outdoor garden raised children's awareness of the natural world.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Children enjoyed imaginative play in the well-presented home corner and 'hotel'. They were encouraged to invent situations and re-visit familiar experiences of home and holidays. A model pirate ship and figures provided further opportunities for children to enter the world of make believe. Displays of children's art work focused on children's well-developed drawing skills. Children

took pleasure in using a range of paints and tools to express their ideas and feeling through art. A focus on weaving helped children learn a good range of lacing techniques and suitable opportunities to create objects using branches, leaves and twigs. These had been placed on public display at Glasgow University to share children's achievements with the wider community. Children participated with enthusiasm in singing and playing percussion instruments.

- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Children were developing effective control of their hands and fingers through using a range of construction toys, games and puzzles. Staff provided some opportunities for children to take part in energetic play in the outdoor garden area. They enjoyed running and chasing and exploring. They had useful access to the school hall weekly for physical games and activities. Through this, children were developing a good awareness of space. They practised crawling and bouncing and cooperated well during parachute games. Staff did not plan well enough to ensure that children's physical skills were effectively developed. Children had fewer opportunities to use large equipment and to access daily energetic physical activity in- and out-of-doors.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had established very positive relationships with children and their families. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with the work of the nursery. A few wanted more information about their children's progress and learning and the work of the nursery in general.

Parents were actively involved in the work of the centre. A parents' forum suitably involved them in developing plans for the nursery garden. Parents helpfully participated in routine daily duties within the playroom. They shared their skills in baking and read stories with children. Staff delivered a useful workshop to parents focusing on the curriculum. Effective promotion of learning initiatives between home and school included a bear that accompanied children home at weekends allowing parents to support their children's learning through recording his adventures using drawings, early writing and photographs. Evaluation slips of children's positive views measured its success.

Good links had been established with local primary schools. Information was shared with parents and with the receiving P1 teacher. Visits from the local primary school, and staff involvement in transition arrangements, helped ease children's transfer to school. The centre had good arrangements to enable new children to settle and become familiar with the daily routine.

Staff had formed very good working relationships with support agencies including the child psychologist, social work and health visitor. Children with additional learning needs were suitably supported. With the help of external agencies, and in consultation with parents, individualised educational programmes were compiled and regularly reviewed at meetings. However, short-term goals linked to these long-term targets were not effectively planned for by nursery staff. Learning opportunities

within each key aspect, tailored to the individual needs of the appropriate child, had yet to be developed.

Management

Standard 14

Overall, the leadership of the nursery was good. The acting headteacher had overall responsibility for the management of the nursery within the school. She had delegated the management of the nursery to the principal teacher. The management team were open and approachable and communicated well with staff and parents. Both the acting headteacher and principal teacher had expectations of high-quality provision in the nursery. They did not yet provide clear enough direction and guidance to staff on how to further improve the curriculum and children's learning experiences.

The acting headteacher had clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of the nursery staff. The nursery teacher managed the day-to-day organisation of the nursery, ably supported by the early childhood educator. The committed and hardworking staff formed a supportive team.

The management team and staff made good use of the nursery and local authority policies and procedures to help them in their work. They ensured that nursery staff had a sound knowledge of child protection guidelines. All staff had completed child protection training. Staff took part in regular reviews of their performance and development needs. They were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice, qualification criteria and timescale for registration.

The management team used self-evaluation procedures to review each term the nursery work with staff. The principal teacher observed nursery practice and held monthly meetings to provide some feedback to staff about the nursery planning process. An appropriate development plan was in place and staff had implemented priorities for improvement. The management team had a formal, basic monitoring system in place. However, procedures were not sufficiently systematic or rigorous to impact on and further improve the quality of children's progress in learning.

Key strengths

- Children's art work which enhanced the nursery environment.
- The very good programmes in emotional, personal and social development, communication and language, knowledge and understanding of the world and expressive and aesthetic development.
- Commitment and hard work of the staff team.
- Relationships between staff, parents and children and the very good level of support offered by parents to the nursery.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

The recommendations from the previous Care Commission inspection had been met.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should improve playroom experiences for younger children.
- Staff should further improve questioning to extend children's thinking.
- Staff should continue to develop assessment and recording procedures.
- Staff should extend planning procedures for children requiring additional help in learning by ensuring short-term goals effectively link to long-term aims.
- Management and staff should further develop their formal systems for monitoring and evaluating the nursery to more clearly focus on playroom practice and children's development and learning.

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.

Ann Anderson
Care Commission

Liz Oliver
HM Inspectorate of Education