

**Larbert Day Nursery
Falkirk Council
25 August 2010**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects centres in order to let parents¹, children and the local community know whether their centre provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with centre staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the head of centre and staff about the strengths of the centre, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into playrooms and join other activities which children are involved in. We also gather the views of parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the centre. We describe how well children are doing, how good the centre is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the centre. We also comment on how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the centre is led and how all staff help the centre achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends

Contents

1. The centre
2. Particular strengths of the centre
3. How well do children learn and achieve?
4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?
5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?
6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?
7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?
8. What happens next?

1. The centre

Larbert Day Nursery was inspected in May 2010 by HMIE and the Care Commission as part of the integrated inspection programme. The centre caters for pre-school children aged six weeks to five years. It is registered for 62 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 119 at the time of the inspection.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Opportunities for wider achievement and progress made by children in their learning.
- High quality support provided for children to help them learn in an inclusive environment.
- Staff interactions with children which support, challenge and extend learning.
- Supportive and effective partnerships with families and a wide range of agencies.
- Commitment of management and staff to ongoing improvements to ensure success for all.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children in all playrooms are motivated and actively involved in their own learning. They have extensive opportunities to choose and plan their own activities. The youngest children enjoy looking at books independently. They are developing language through singing and group activities. In the toddler rooms, children play well together and have well developed skills such as sharing and turn taking. They enjoy hunting for mini beasts in the nursery garden and examine them closely with magnifiers. The older children engage confidently in activities and are developing skills such as problem solving and decision making. This is helping them to become independent in their learning. Children have many opportunities to experience success and contribute to the wider community. They are gaining confidence

and are learning to be responsible. Successes, in and outwith nursery, are recognised and celebrated on 'Achievement Walls'. With support from the local secondary school, pre-school children recorded their own CD to sell in order to raise money for an outing. Almost all children are developing a very good environmental awareness, including the importance of recycling. Children use a range of technology with confidence. They use digital video cameras to record their singing performances and pasta machines to explore how spaghetti is made.

Children are making excellent progress in their learning and development. In early language, almost all children listen with enthusiasm in different situations. They talk confidently about their personal interests and nursery experiences. Almost all children show interest in books and are familiar with a range of stories and rhymes. Most children recognise letters and the sounds they make. The majority of children sound words out and a few are becoming confident in early reading skills. Almost all children are actively involved in developing skills in early writing and are keen 'writers' in play situations. A few children enjoy being challenged to write new words, for example labels and captions for displays they have made. Most children are learning how to write letters correctly through using the interactive whiteboard. In early mathematics, almost all children use numbers confidently in their play. They measure and record information in different ways including height charts and simple graphs. Children use mathematical language appropriately, for example to make comparisons in weight and size.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff working with the youngest children take very good account of curriculum guidance to plan effectively for children's learning. The curriculum provided for children aged three to five is broad and varied. It is directed by children's interests and helps children to achieve through play. Staff continue to make positive progress in implementing *Curriculum for Excellence*. They reflect on and improve the curriculum they provide and this is supported by the visiting

teacher. Learning opportunities are enhanced by visitors to the nursery, including football coaching and music and language specialists. A working group is established to look at ways which literacy and numeracy can be further embedded in the curriculum. The outdoor area has been developed significantly and offers opportunities for flexible use and learning across the curriculum. Across the nursery, staff interactions with children are of a consistently high quality and support, and extend and challenge children's learning.

Meeting learning needs is excellent. Staff know children and families extremely well and are sensitive to individual needs. They work in partnership with families and a range of agencies to ensure they get it right for every child. Children's needs are clearly identified at an early stage and appropriate challenges for individual needs are evident across the nursery. Every child has a detailed learning profile which provides a story of their learning. Detailed written plans to support learning and medical needs are in place for children who require extra support. Staff are sensitive to ensure that all children are part of the nursery and they have created a very inclusive ethos. Support staff work very effectively to meet the needs of children with complex additional support needs and help them to access as much of the curriculum as possible.

4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?

A very strong partnership exists between families and the nursery. Parents and carers are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education, for example through learning profiles and home link learning in science and story sacks. A very informative annual open evening is held which includes professionals from other agencies. With the support of Community Education, the nursery runs a weekly parents' group. This provides opportunities for parents to develop skills in areas such as healthy eating, beauty therapy, yoga and arts and crafts. The group also supports ongoing events in the nursery, such as the school leavers' graduation. The nursery has established a

number of effective partnerships within the community, including local schools. This supports effective transition arrangements for children when it is time to start P1. Transitions into the nursery and between playrooms are well planned to meet the needs of each child and family.

5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?

Staff have a strong commitment to the continued development of the nursery. Self-evaluation is seen as central to this. All staff are involved in reflecting on the quality of what they do in order to identify priorities for improvement. The manager also carries out an ongoing detailed programme of monitoring of particular aspects of the nursery. The shared agenda for improvement is delivered through the nursery improvement plan. This contains appropriate areas for development which have positive impact on improving children's experiences. The views of everyone involved with the nursery are sought and staff continue to develop creative ways of doing this.

6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?

A very positive ethos exists in the nursery. Everyone is respected, valued and welcomed. Staff have high expectations of children's learning. They work closely with parents to ensure children are challenged to be the best they can with no limitations. A healthy lifestyle is promoted through a wide range of activities and initiatives. Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of how the lives of children can differ and an appreciation of their place in the world. Staff are very aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and take appropriate action to ensure that all children are protected. Children are treated with respect, fairness and equality and are encouraged to treat others and their environment in the same way.

7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?

The nursery is well regarded in the local community and management and staff are proud of their nursery. The manager is viewed as approachable and responsive and is well respected by children, staff and families. With her management team she provides strong, positive leadership. They have a clear vision of what they would like Larbert Day Nursery to be like and this is shared with the enthusiastic and very effective staff team. Together, they demonstrate a strong commitment to the ongoing development of high quality learning experiences and care, resulting in success for children and families.

8. What happens next?

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the centre, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its centres.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- Continue to develop and deliver high quality learning experiences for children.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the centre there was one recommendation. This has since been addressed.

Requirements

- The provider is required to make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users in relation to appropriate flooring in the baby snack and changing areas.
This is to comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument 2002/114 Regulation 4 (1) (a)
Timescale: Within eight weeks of receipt of this report.

Quality indicators help centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a centre. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish centres are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Larbert Day Nursery.

Improvements in performance	excellent
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	excellent

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

Managing Inspector: Barbara Galbraith

Care Commission Officer: Fiona Young

25 August 2010

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means	outstanding, sector leading
very good	means	major strengths
good	means	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	means	major weaknesses

If you would like to find out more about our inspections or get an electronic copy of this report, please go to www.hmie.gov.uk.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation, or if you wish to comment about any aspect of our inspections. You can contact us at HMIEenquiries@hmie.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Text phone users can contact us on 01506 600 236. This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as the line will not connect you to a member of staff.

You can find our complaints procedure on our website www.hmie.gov.uk or alternatively you can contact our Complaints Manager, at the address above or by telephoning 01506 600259.

You can also contact the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, telephone 0845 603 0890.

Crown Copyright 2010
HM Inspectorate of Education