

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

8 October 2003

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 head of service, staff and the Director of Education. 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.

Complaints Co-ordinator
Headquarters
Care Commission
Compass House
Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

Hazel Dewart
HM Inspectorate of Education
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
EDINBURGH
EH11 3XD

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Integrated Inspection by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education of Laurieston Primary School Nursery Class Falkirk Council

Introduction

Laurieston Nursery Class was inspected in May 2003 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 children from the age of three to entry to primary school. At the time of the inspection the roll was 40.

The environment

The accommodation, situated in one wing of the primary school, had been recently adapted for use by the nursery class. It was in a very good state of repair and provided a safe, clean environment for children. However, the children's cloakroom in the entrance area was congested at arrival and departure times. Secure access into the nursery area from outside, and into the school from the nursery needed to be improved. The outdoor area was pleasant, secure and easily accessible from the nursery class. Children made regular use of the gym hall for energetic play. The nursery class was well resourced.

Staff should implement clear procedures for reporting accidents to parents.

Quality of children's experience

Staff had developed very good relationships with children. They organised activities and resources to support learning in the key aspects of the curriculum. They interacted positively to extend children's language and responded appropriately to support individual needs. Staff observed and recorded children's progress but required to make more use of assessment information to inform the next steps in learning. Staff needed to plan more choice for children in their activities and review the balance and pace of the sessions. Some children needed to be challenged more effectively to extend their learning.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children showed awareness and consideration of others and played co-operatively. They persevered in their tasks. They enjoyed helping to prepare snack. Children needed to become more independent and be more involved in making decisions and expressing choices.

- The programme for communication and language was good. Children talked and listened purposefully to adults and one another. They enjoyed stories and some made good, independent use of the book corner. A few children were developing good skills in emergent writing and were able to identify the initial letter in their names. Staff encouraged story making by scribing children's stories about their paintings.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Staff organised outings in the local area and welcomed visitors to the nursery. More opportunities to encourage children's natural curiosity and exploration needed to be provided. Children were finding out about the natural world through helping to look after plants and putting food on the bird table outdoors. They had good opportunities to identify numbers in counting games and songs. They were learning to use the computer.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Children had access to paints and drawing materials and used a variety of media to practice model making and collage. They enjoyed role-play and were encouraged to experiment with unusual musical sounds. Staff should promote further children's creativity and imagination.
- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Children were developing good hand control through the use of pencils, construction toys and jigsaws. They were learning simple safety rules in energetic play outside and were confident in the use of equipment. Staff provided regular opportunities for the development of physical skills in the gym hall.

Support for children and families

Staff provided good support to children and families. Parents who responded to the questionnaire were very satisfied with almost all of the aspects of the nursery class. They acknowledged the support of the staff and welcomed occasions to discuss their children's progress.

Staff were aware of the legislation and procedures related to children with special educational needs. Individual children benefited from a generous allocation of auxiliary help. However, the content of individualised educational programmes should be reviewed and more specific targets and strategies identified to meet children's individual needs.

Management

The nursery was well managed. Staff had clear roles and responsibilities. The deputy headteacher of the primary school monitored the work of the nursery class and ensured efficient deployment of staff. Training and professional development were given a high priority and staff had access to a range of local authority training opportunities. However, all staff required training in child protection procedures. The nursery class had an appropriate range of policies to advise staff but the complaints and child protection policies needed to be up-dated.

The nursery staff had engaged in a comprehensive self-evaluation exercise using the local authority advice and had identified appropriate priorities for development.

Key strengths

- The positive relationships amongst staff, children and parents.
- The attractive, well resourced environment.
- The caring staff who were committed to the work of the nursery class.

Recommendations for improvement

- The school and nursery staff should review access arrangements to the nursery class.
- Staff should improve the pace and routines of the day and include more opportunity for children to make choices. Additional challenging opportunities should be provided for able children.
- Staff should improve aspects of the programmes in children's development and learning mentioned in the report.
- Staff should make more use of assessment information to influence both planning and the content of individualised educational programmes.
- Staff should update their child protection and complaints procedures and undertake training in child protection issues.

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.

Morag Skinner
Care Commission

Moira McLaren
HM Inspectorate of Education