

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

**8 February 2006**

**Lochardil Primary School Nursery Class  
Lochardil Road  
Inverness  
IV2 4LB**

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](http://www.carecommission.com) and HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://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](mailto:enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: [www.scottishombudsman.org.uk](http://www.scottishombudsman.org.uk).

A copy of the HMIE complaints procedure is available from the HMIE website at [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01506 600 258.

Crown Copyright 2006

Care Commission  
HM Inspectorate of Education

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

---

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

## **Introduction**

Lochardil Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in October 2005 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 24 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 28.

## **The environment**

### **Standard 2**

The nursery was located in an annexe in the grounds of Lochardil Primary School. The nursery room was bright, clean and provided a stimulating environment where children could express themselves through play. Staff had organised the layout of the room and resources well to give children choice and access to a range of activities. Quiet areas had been created for children who wished to work independently. A soft-surfaced outside play area gave children space for more energetic play. The area was safe and secure. Children were able to move freely between the outdoor and indoor environments. Staff made good use of displays of photographs and provided useful information for parents and carers in the entrance of the nursery.

Health and safety policies were in place however the fire log needed to be correctly maintained. Whilst policies and procedures were in place for giving medication with parental consent the system to inform parents/carers that medication had been administered needed to be formalised. The school had initiated some improvement to the fabric of the building following a Requirement made by the Care Commission at the last inspection. However, the base of the external cladding on the front of the building was soft to touch and holes were apparent.

## **Quality of children's experience**

### **Standard 4 & 5**

All children attending the nursery class were in their pre-school year. Staff greeted children individually and welcomed them warmly. They knew children well and were responsive to their needs. Staff had high expectations of children's behaviour and learning and created a purposeful learning environment where children's contributions were praised and encouraged. Staff planned a good range of suitably challenging activities and most children became absorbed in their play. Staff engaged very well with children to support and extend their learning through high-quality dialogue. However, staff did not allow sufficient time

for free play to ensure individual children had time to access the full range of learning opportunities available to them.

Staff had developed very good systems for planning which stated clearly what children should learn. They observed and recorded children's progress regularly and used the information to identify and support their next steps in learning.

Features of the programmes for children included the following

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Staff made very good use of praise and encouragement to develop children's self esteem. Almost all children were happy and confident and played well with each other. All children understood and responded to the routines of the nursery class and they followed simple rules well. Most children persevered and helped each other to complete tasks such as jigsaws and construction. Staff encouraged children to be helpful to each other and to take some responsibility for taking care of equipment and for tidying away.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Staff took every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary during their conversations with them. Almost all children were developing effective talking and listening skills. Most were confident in talking to adults and their friends. Staff provided a variety of information books and story books throughout the nursery. Staff made effective use of "big books" to encourage children's understanding and enjoyment of stories. Most children were developing an awareness of print. They were able to recognise their names and those of their friends. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to develop early writing skills at the writing table and in the home corner. Almost all children were drawing or making marks and some were writing their names.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Staff provided very good experiences for children to develop investigative and problem solving skills. Children explored the natural world using magnifying glasses at the nature table and a group took part in investigating the properties of milk during a science experiment. Children were developing an awareness of early mathematical concepts. They were able to sort, match, count, and recognise colours and shapes. Children made very good use of every day technology by using the vacuum cleaner during role-play and by working independently at the computer. Staff encouraged children's interest in other cultures by celebrating important festivals such as Chinese New Year.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Staff planned opportunities for children to paint, draw and make models. However, few children chose these activities during the course of their free play. A number of children enjoyed experimenting with colour at group time. Artwork on display showed children were drawing with increasing attention to detail. Most children took part in role-play in the home corner and with the hobby horses. They shared ideas and played imaginatively together. Staff had provided some interesting percussion instruments but

children made little use of these. Staff now needed to give children more opportunities to express themselves creatively through singing, music making and dance.

- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Children were developing good control of their fingers and hands through a range of activities including using writing tools, jigsaw puzzles, construction toys and the computer. Staff encouraged children to access the outdoor area and most children chose to play outside for periods of time. They played energetically on wheeled toys and made good use of space when playing imaginative games. Staff made good use of the weekly visit to the school hall to develop children's physical skills. However, they did not provide children with sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in handling balls, balancing, climbing and movement during their outdoor play.

## **Support for children and families**

### Standard 6

Staff knew children and families very well. Staff and parents worked well together to support children. Staff had established weekly home-link sheets to ensure all parents were aware of what was happening in the nursery and how they could support their children's learning. Staff invited parents in to *stay and play* if they wished to take part in nursery sessions. They provided an interesting range of reading materials for parents to gain more information on various aspects of child development and early education in general. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied with the work of the nursery.

School management and nursery staff had put very effective transition arrangements in place for children who were entering the nursery and for those moving on to P1. They organised visits to and from the nursery with the playgroup or receiving primary schools. These arrangements helped children to become familiar with new situations before moving on.

Staff were aware of children who required additional support with language. Through careful observation, they identified concerns and worked with parents and agencies, including speech and language therapists to provide appropriate support.

## **Management**

### Standard 14

The overall management of the nursery class was good. The headteacher ensured the nursery was involved in appropriate whole-school activities and included the work of the nursery in the school development plan. He had delegated the responsibility for managing the nursery class to his depute. The depute headteacher managed the nursery well and was very supportive of staff. The nursery coordinator teacher was on extended leave and had not yet been replaced. In her absence, the depute headteacher provided additional help and guidance to staff. The school had also made arrangements to provide additional cover for the assistant to complete the necessary administration. The depute headteacher visited the nursery regularly, attended weekly planning meetings and monitored the planning. The hard working, enthusiastic staff worked very well as a team. The

nursery assistant led the team well on a day-to-day basis. She was well supported by the nursery auxiliary.

The school had made a good start to evaluating the work of the nursery. The depute headteacher led staff in taking a broad look at all areas of practice on an annual basis. They took a closer look at identified areas in line with the whole-school programme. The procedures for evaluation should be developed further to involve children and parents more fully in the consultation process. The headteacher and depute were aware of the need to include the nursery in the school's programme for monitoring of learning and teaching. They should now put this in place to further support staff in developing their practice.

Policies and procedures had been developed in line with local and national guidance. They were accessible to parents and carers. Management and staff were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the forthcoming registration of staff.

## **Key strengths**

- The bright, stimulating environment.
- The very good procedures for planning and assessment.
- The very good programmes for emotional, personal and social development, communication and language and knowledge and understanding of the world.
- The hard working, enthusiastic staff who engaged very well with children to support and extend their learning.
- The highly supportive relationships between staff and parents and the parent's involvement in their children's pre-school experience.

## **Recommendations for improvement**

- As part of the nursery's policy and procedures for administration of medication the system to inform nursery parents that medication has been administered should be formalised.
- The fire log should be correctly maintained.
- Staff should review the pace and balance of the day to ensure more time is available for children to learn through freely chosen activities.
- Staff should continue to develop the programmes for expressive and aesthetic development and physical development and movement as detailed in this report.
- The headteacher and depute should continue to develop more rigorous procedures for monitoring learning and teaching and involve parents and children more in evaluating the work of the nursery.

## Requirements

- The accommodation must be kept in a good state of repair both internally and externally.  
This is to comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument 2002 Number 114 Regulation 10(2)(b).

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.

Jenny Eldrett  
Care Commission

Kathleen Robertson  
HM Inspectorate of Education