

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

20 December 2006

Maddiston Primary School Nursery Class
Main Road
Maddiston
Falkirk
FK2 0LH

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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Introduction

Maddiston Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in September 2006 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. HMIE carried out this inspection on behalf of both organisations and consulted the Care Commission about its findings. The nursery catered for pre-school children aged three to five years. It was registered for 30 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 56.

The environment

Standard 2

Maddiston Nursery Class was located within an annex adjacent to the main building of Maddiston Primary School. A complete new school is due to open in autumn 2007. The nursery class consisted of a large playroom and an open area used for energetic play. A corridor area was used well to display information for parents. Children had access to their own toilets. A security system was in operation and it was used effectively. Appropriate health and safety procedures were in place.

The playroom was very attractively displayed to reflect all areas of the curriculum. It was set out to enable children to work together in a range of groupings or have a quiet time alone. Resources were plentiful, well organised and of good quality. Children had access to a small enclosed outdoor garden area and the local community centre for regular energetic play.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Children were happily settled into nursery routines. They took part enthusiastically in a very good range of challenging and stimulating activities. Children were encouraged and were confident in making choices and being creative. Staff interacted very effectively with children and helped them to successfully access the wide variety of opportunities available. They made very good use of questioning to support and extend children's thinking and learning. Staff successfully promoted positive behaviour and raised children's self esteem through a sharing time during the session.

Planning was very good. Staff regularly planned activities in consultation with the children and encouraged the children to initiate other activities. They effectively built on prior learning and identified next steps for learning. A new system for observation

was in place. Plans were displayed for parents and all had an opportunity to contribute ideas. Detailed reports were shared with parents and informal exchanges of information were frequent.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. The ethos in the nursery was commendable. Staff were very caring and responsive. They had high expectations of children's achievements and used praise well to build confidence. Children showed a high level of independence. They helped with snack, accessed all activities and tidied their playroom well. Children cooperated with each other and almost all were able to share and take turns. They were able to concentrate on chosen tasks for a period of time and reflected a great deal of purpose in their play. Children were able to put on their jackets to go to the community centre and responded well to instructions.
- The programme for language and communication was very good, children had access to a rich environment. Aspects of the programme were excellent. A wide range of stimulating books was available throughout all areas of the playroom to enhance and extend children's learning. Staff had ensured that the comfortable book area was quiet and inviting. Children used it well to develop their early reading skills. Staff had thoughtfully displayed appropriate environmental print in all play areas and children were able to use it to effect. A writing table encouraged children to explore early skills and many could write their name. Children purposefully extended their own skills by taking writing throughout the playroom. Staff actively encouraged children's communication and many children were able to engage in extended conversations.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Children used early mathematical skills in all aspects of their play. They could count, identify colours and name shapes. Staff skilfully selected resources to promote the language of mathematics. Children were learning about their local area by drawing detailed maps and staff had made effective use of visitors and outings to enhance this knowledge. Children had very good opportunities to explore their senses and learn about materials. They were able to discuss waterproof clothing on a wet day and had the opportunity to investigate planting outdoors. Staff used information and communications technology (ICT) to enhance learning. Children used the computer and the electronic keyboard particularly well.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Children had wide-ranging opportunities to develop their creative and imaginative skills. Staff had ensured an extensive area was available to the children to express their thoughts and feelings through paint, collage and model making. Staff planned all activities very well to ensure a progression of techniques and children's finished work was very attractively displayed throughout the nursery. Children took part enthusiastically in the hospital role-play area and used their imagination in other areas of the

playroom. They spontaneously created a band with a very good selection of instruments and were able to sustain a rhythm whilst listening to a piece of music on a keyboard.

- The programme for physical development and movement was very good, children had daily opportunities for energetic play indoors and timetabled activities outside and in the nearby community centre. Staff ensured the experiences were varied and progressive in their level of skill. Children excitedly ran, jumped and made different shapes with their bodies in response to stimulus. They climbed and pedalled bikes indoors. They were especially aware of health and fitness. Children were developing very good control of their fingers and hands. They used scissors, small construction and creative tools independently.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

The nursery offered very good support to all children and their families. Staff knew children very well and intervened sensitively in play activities to support their development and learning. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very happy with most aspects of the nursery's work. A small number would like more information concerning their child. Parents were encouraged to take an active part in the life of the nursery including the planning of themes. Staff provided parents with useful up-to-date information through regular newsletters, informal discussions and the use of informative weekly notice boards.

There was a well-established programme of induction for children transferring to primary school. Teachers and nursery staff met regularly throughout the year to discuss arrangements.

The headteacher and principal teacher liaised with other agencies to provide support with those who required additional support for learning. Effective links had been made with a range of professionals, including a speech therapist. Children were thoughtfully cared for and appropriate individualised education plans were in place. Parents were fully involved in the process.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher provided very good leadership. He was strongly committed to the work of the nursery and actively included it within wider school activities. The roles and responsibilities of the management team and nursery staff were well defined and communicated clearly. The headteacher was approachable and supportive. He had fostered very good teamwork skills with the nursery staff and met weekly with them to discuss their work. He actively encouraged them to take part in wider early years initiatives.

The principal teacher provided very good leadership and had developed a supportive role within the nursery team. She had responsibility for monitoring and evaluation. This was carried out systematically in line with the school. She made weekly visits to the nursery and had developed very good relationships with the staff and children.

The nursery teacher was a very strong leader. She was highly skilled, knowledgeable and had the support of very good nursery staff. She managed planning and curriculum development to a high standard and was extremely committed to the work of the nursery and its future direction.

The management team had developed a useful range of policies to support the work of the nursery. Staff were knowledgeable about child protection procedures and had undergone training. Staff were aware of the requirements within the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice.

There were very good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery and this information had been used to develop an effective improvement plan. The evaluations from the nursery teacher were particularly thorough. These could be further extended to include the views of both children and parents within specific areas of focus

Key strengths

- A very stimulating learning environment enhanced by displays of children's work.
- Effectiveness of staff interactions in supporting and meeting children's needs in development and learning.
- The very good programmes.
- Leadership of the nursery and the commitment of the strong staff team.

Recommendations for improvement

- Continue to build on high-quality experiences for children and extend the rigour of self-evaluation.

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.

Marion Burns
Shona Taylor
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