

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Mill of Mains Primary School
Nursery Class
Dundee City Council**

21 June 2006

**Mill of Mains Primary School Nursery Class
Barns of Claverhouse Road
Dundee
DD4 9RD**

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.

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 Mill of Mains Primary School Nursery Class Dundee City Council

Introduction

Mill of Mains 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. An inspection of the primary school was carried out at the same time by HMIE and is the subject of a separate report. 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 20 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 30.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery was situated in a classroom within the primary school. The environment was attractive and provided a welcoming, pleasant and stimulating environment, suited to meeting the needs of nursery children. Children had access to adjacent toilet facilities. The nursery was safe, secure and in a good state of repair.

Staff made very effective use of the play space within the classroom and in the adjoining corridor. The layout allowed children to play independently and together in small groups. Children's work was displayed attractively throughout the nursery. Staff made effective use of the display area in the entrance hall to provide useful information for parents and carers. The nursery provided direct access to a secure outside play area. Staff had identified the need to develop the garden area.

Children had regular access to the wider school environment including the gym hall and general purpose room. Staff provided a good range of suitable resources. They organised the resources effectively to allow children easy access and to support independent choice.

Appropriate risk assessments had been completed and implemented by staff. Effective systems were in place to record health and safety checks. The nursery conformed to all other relevant legislation.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff provided a range of activities and experiences to meet the needs and interests of children. They planned and organised

activities well and ensured they were appropriate to the development stages of the children. Children were actively engaged in free-play activities. They made choices, planned their work and were able to express their ideas. Staff supported children very well and interacted effectively during free-play activities. They made very good use of questioning and discussion to extend children's talking and thinking skills. Staff were consistent in their approach and had high expectations of children's learning and behaviour. However, they needed to increase opportunities for children to access the enclosed garden area for energetic play and fresh air.

Staff made very good use of observations of children's learning to inform the planning process. Plans identified what children were expected to learn and the adult role in supporting them. Staff discussed and evaluated the planned activities. They allowed sufficient flexibility to extend children's changing interests. Staff displayed attractive folders of children's work within the nursery. Parents and children were encouraged to contribute photographs and other interesting information. Staff recorded children's progress and identified their next steps in learning. They provided written reports for parents annually. Staff needed to organise evidence of children's achievement more systematically.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were highly motivated and engaged in their play. They were encouraged to plan activities and select materials. Some persevered for long periods to complete their chosen tasks. Children were well supported by caring staff. They played well together, shared resources and cooperated in their play. Staff used praise effectively and had established an award system to reinforce children's understanding of simple rules and routines. Children were learning to be independent. They helped to prepare and serve snacks, washed their hands and tidied the nursery effectively.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Staff had created an attractive and well-resourced book corner. They used reference books throughout the playroom to support interests and themes. Children accessed books independently, recalled favourite stories and shared stories with groups of friends. Staff and children engaged in high-quality conversation throughout the session. Children expressed their ideas clearly and enthusiastically. Staff organised a writing area where children practised writing their names. They selected magnetic letters, wrote shopping lists and sticky notes and marked attendance on the daily register.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children had good opportunities to develop their skills in early mathematics. They counted, grouped and sorted coloured bears and recognised magnetic numbers and shapes. Staff provided a range of resources to encourage children to develop their understanding of information and communications technology (ICT). Children used a metal detector to find hidden objects in the sand tray and estimated the distance a programmable toy had to travel

across a table. Staff encouraged children to observe birds in the garden. The children made bird cake to feed them and used a tally chart to record their sightings. However, staff made insufficient use of the outdoor garden.

- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Staff organised the art and craft area effectively to allow children choice and access to a range of resources. Children selected materials and designed and made their own boats. Children played imaginatively in the house area in the corridor. They walked with the pram and visited the book corner to buy books for the baby. Staff needed to evaluate children's use of this area to ensure that the resources available fully meet children's needs. Children used the small music area well. They played percussion instruments to accompany taped music.
- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Children were encouraged to run, hop, skip and jump during weekly visits to the school gym. They worked enthusiastically in small groups to develop ball control and throwing and catching skills. Children developed skills in movement but had insufficient opportunities for energetic play outside. Children were developing good control of their hands and fingers. They were learning to use scissors and appropriate tools. For example, they wrapped small pieces of foil around their models.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had developed good relationships with children and parents. They made effective use of newsletters and display boards to share a range of useful information with parents. Staff encouraged parents and children to develop healthy lifestyles. They gave parents regular snack menus and provided a note of fruit and vegetables that children had tried in nursery. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and those spoken with on the day, were satisfied with the service.

The nursery teacher had established links with local nurseries and centres. She encouraged staff to share information effectively and to participate in joint training events. The school liaised with a range of support services and was able to seek advice and support for children with additional needs as appropriate.

Staff planned a programme to support children's transfer to P1. The P1 teacher visited the nursery children and arranged sessions in school during the summer term. The nursery children were well supported by the 'buddy' system.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher provided good leadership overall. She delegated the day-to-day management of the nursery to the deputy headteacher. The deputy headteacher made regular informal visits and led monthly meetings to support staff.

The nursery teacher worked as link teacher between two nursery classes. She worked as part of the nursery team for two days

each week. She had developed good relationships with staff and supported them well in the playroom and through weekly planning meetings.

The nursery had clear aims and a full range of policies which were reviewed regularly. Staff were aware of policies and procedures for child protection and had been involved in a whole-school awareness raising session.

All staff were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the procedures for registration and meeting training requirements. There was an established programme for staff review. Staff had good opportunities to access relevant training courses to support their professional development and the work of the nursery.

The headteacher had identified the need to involve staff in the evaluation of the work of the service. Nursery planning was monitored in line with school planning procedures. The management team needed to further develop systematic playroom visits to monitor and evaluate the quality of children's learning experiences. Staff had agreed clear priorities in planning for improvement and recognised a need to evaluate progress in development priorities.

Key strengths

- The effective use of space and resources within the playroom to provide a stimulating learning environment.
- The high quality of staff interaction with children.
- The very good programmes for emotional, personal and social development and communication and language.
- The effective teamwork of the nursery staff and link nursery teacher.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

There were two recommendations made in the previous Care Commission report. The nursery had made satisfactory progress towards these recommendations.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should continue to increase the use of the outdoor play area for regular energetic play and improve the provision to extend opportunities for investigation and exploration of the natural world.
- The management team should develop rigorous systems to monitor all aspects of the nursery practice.
- The management team should develop evaluation systems which regularly include the views of staff, parents and children.

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.

Jane Mason
HM Inspectorate of Education