

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Newington Primary School
Nursery Class
Dumfries and Galloway Council**

31 May 2006

**Newington Primary School Nursery Class
Hospital Road
Annan
DG12 6LA**

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.

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Introduction

Newington Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in February 2006 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 40 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 74.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery offered a caring, welcoming and stimulating play environment. The accommodation was self-contained and consisted of two inviting playrooms, toilets and kitchen provision. A small adjacent room was used for imaginary play and as an office area and storeroom. Staff needed to reassess the room's function and make it safer for children. A secure outdoor area was regularly used for energetic play. There was no indoor reception area for parents.

Staff made very good use of space and there were good opportunities for children to play and learn independently and in groups. Samples of children's work and some photographs were attractively displayed in the nursery to enhance the environment and celebrate children's achievements.

The premises were secure and staff took a number of measures to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. Some risk assessments had been carried out. Staff had not been fully involved in this process and risk assessment documentation was not available in the nursery. Staff needed to extend the range of risk assessments and, in particular, carry out risk assessments to strengthen arrangements for children's safety. They should include the small room used for imaginary play, children's access to the school gym hall, and toilet and changing arrangements. Fire drills were not carried out regularly enough and had not involved all children in the nursery.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had developed very good relationships with children. They knew children well and were responsive to their individual needs. Staff used questioning very effectively to support and extend children's learning. The learning environment was carefully planned to provide children with a range of stimulating activities.

Children were encouraged to express their views and exercise choice. They were highly motivated and enthusiastic learners. Planning was good. Staff met weekly to discuss and develop the recently-introduced planning system. All staff were involved in evaluating the children's learning experiences. However, what children were expected to learn was not always clearly stated. Systems for gathering observation and assessment information were fair. Children's progress was not updated systematically and next steps in children's learning were not identified clearly.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were happy and secure. They were developing friendships and cooperated very well during play. Staff encouraged children to develop independence skills during snack and when putting on jackets. Many children persevered with jigsaw puzzles and construction toys. They approached activities with confidence and were very comfortable with nursery rules and routines. They were developing good hygiene practice in washing their hands before snack.
- The programme for communication and language was good. Staff provided good opportunities for children to develop skills in listening and talking in small groups. They encouraged children to use books to find interesting information about dinosaurs. Children used books independently and were developing an understanding of the language and layout. There were many good opportunities for children to recognise their name in print. Staff encouraged children to use magnetic letters and develop an awareness of letter sounds. Children did not have sufficient opportunity to develop early writing skills through play.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Children used table-top games to develop matching and sorting skills. They used beads and scales to develop an understanding of weight and measure. Simple materials such as paper and sticking tape were used very effectively to develop problem-solving skills. Staff encouraged children to count out and develop number skills through play. Children had recently planted bulbs and were learning about the process of growth. Staff provided regular opportunities for children to use the computer.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Staff provided children with very good opportunities to explore a range of art and craft activities. Children created 3D models using junk. They explored a range of painting and gluing resources and staff encouraged children to be independent and creative. Children were developing role-play skills in the house corner by dressing up and pretending to be vets. They used toy cars and dinosaurs to develop imaginative play. Musical instruments were used by children to explore sound and develop an understanding of beat.
- The programme for physical development and movement was very good. Children visited the gym in the primary school weekly to follow a programme of physical education

(PE) delivered by a PE instructor. They were developing coordination and balancing skills using a range of equipment. They took part in physical exercise and learned about the importance of health and fitness. Staff provided opportunities for children to take part in daily energetic activity. Children were developing an awareness of space and used wheeled toys in the well-resourced outdoor area.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff provided good support for children and families. They had developed good relationships with parents and carers. Parents were kept informed about the nursery through a useful notice board, termly newsletters and open evenings. Staff recognised the importance of keeping parents informed of their child's progress. As a result of a parental survey, they had recently introduced a system where parents could arrange to speak to their child's key worker on a regular basis. An effective transition programme had been organised with a number of primary schools to support children as they moved on to P1.

Support for children requiring additional help in their learning was very good. Individualised educational programmes were used very effectively to ensure children had their needs met. The support assistant provided very good assistance to children. Staff had established very effective links with outside support agencies.

Management

Standard 14

The management of the nursery was good and areas of management responsibility were clearly defined. The headteacher was strongly committed to involving the nursery in the life of the school. The nursery teacher had day-to-day responsibility for the nursery. She fostered effective working relationships with her staff, parents and children. Staff were enthusiastic and motivated, and worked well together as a team. They were fair and consistent in their practice.

A file of policies and procedures was available in the nursery to promote good practice and provide staff guidance. Staff were familiar with the child protection policy and had attended relevant training.

Staff all held a relevant childcare qualification and will meet the registration requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council. They had opportunities to attend a broad range of short courses to meet their needs and those of the service. Students had a sound induction into the nursery and commented that they had been well supported by the nursery teacher and her staff. The headteacher had yet to carry out formal reviews for non-teaching staff in the nursery.

Nursery staff met regularly to discuss their work. They evaluated playroom activities but did not make sufficient use of quality indicators and national standards. The headteacher was in the nursery regularly. He carried out some monitoring exercises and attended staff meetings on a monthly basis. The headteacher had completed a standards and quality report and identified areas for development. Staff had not been sufficiently involved in this process. Parental questionnaires had been used to obtain

feedback from parents. Systems for monitoring and self-evaluation needed to be more robust and systematic.

Key strengths

- Warm, caring and well-planned learning environment.
- The overall high quality of curricular programmes.
- The hardworking and committed staff who worked very effectively as a team.
- The very good support for children requiring additional support in their learning.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

Two requirements and five recommendations were made at the previous inspection. The nursery still needed to extend and make full use of risk assessments, and carry out more regular fire drills. Food hygiene training had been identified for staff.

Recommendations for improvement

- All staff to be familiar with, and involved in, the further development of risk assessments. The headteacher should ensure that risk assessments are extended to cover areas identified in this report.
- The regularity of fire drills should be increased to ensure all children have an opportunity to learn emergency procedures.
- The headteacher and staff should develop further the systems for assessment and planning.
- The headteacher and nursery teacher should introduce more robust and systematic procedures for monitoring the work of the nursery and ensure all staff are involved in the process.
- The headteacher should undertake appropriate reviews for each member of staff.

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.

Anne Burns
Care Commission

Donald Currie
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