

**Queen Street Nursery School
Falkirk
FK2 7AF
Falkirk Council
12 March 2008**

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 4 – Engaging With Children Standard 5 – Quality of Experience	Staff/child interaction Structure of the curriculum Children’s progress and development and learning through play
Standard 6 – Support and Development	Meeting children’s needs and care routines Partnership with parents
Standard 14 – Well-managed Service	Leadership and Self-evaluation

Evaluations made using HMIE quality indicators use the following scale, and these words are used in the report to describe the team’s judgements:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| excellent | outstanding, sector leading |
| very good | major strengths |
| good | important strengths, some areas for improvement |
| adequate | strengths just outweigh weaknesses |
| weak | 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.

Introduction

Queen Street Nursery School was inspected in November 2007 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 80 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 78.

Key strengths

- Children who are confident and enthusiastic learners.
- The wide range of learning experiences in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Staff teamwork and communication.
- The leadership of the head of service.

How good is the quality of children's experience?

Standard 4 & 5

Staff supported children very well in their learning. They provided children with an interesting, well-balanced range of learning opportunities. Children were able to make choices and engaged well with the stimulating learning environment. Staff were very respectful towards children, consulting and valuing their contributions. They had very good interactions with children, regularly discussing their interests, making plans and extending their thinking.

Children were making very good progress in all curriculum aspects. They were happy, secure and confident. They were encouraged to develop self-help skills during play and persevered successfully with their chosen tasks. Staff involved children in making decisions and children were able to collaborate well with one another. Children were gaining an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the world through high-quality sensory experiences. They used their senses to explore in depth natural materials both indoors and outside. Technology was used confidently by children to enhance their learning during play. Children used various materials to learn different techniques in arts and crafts. They expressed their own creative

ideas very well in collage, paintings and models. Children had very good hand and finger control and participated in regular energetic physical play.

Children's progress in communication and language was very good. They listened well to instructions from adults or from tapes. Children were confident when talking and listening to adults and contributed well to group discussions. Children were able to sustain their interest in books through the support of staff engaging them well in stories individually or in groups. Children were developing a good understanding of letter sounds and, with support from staff, were making the link between the spoken and written word. Children used the stimulating writing area and wide selection of materials well to make marks, letters and symbols. Many children were beginning to write their own name in play situations.

Children demonstrated a very good understanding of simple mathematical processes such as counting, matching and sorting. Many children were able to identify and use numbers up to ten in counting games and in books. Children practised their problem-solving skills making complex models at the construction area. They were developing a keen interest in number, shape and measurement and, with staff encouragement, used mathematical language appropriately in play.

How well are children supported?

Standard 6

Staff were good at meeting children's needs. They observed children's learning and, with support from the head of service, identified the next steps in learning. Children's progress in learning should be tracked more consistently and regularly to support or challenge children appropriately. Staff were well informed about current legislation in relation to children who required additional help with their learning. After detailed discussion with all partners, staff prepared individualised educational programmes which set out relevant targets and actions. These programmes were reviewed and updated regularly. The nursery accessed additional assistance appropriately to help identify or support children's specific learning needs. Staff had effective procedures with a range of outside agencies, including speech therapists who worked systematically with children improving communication skills. They were also aware of child protection guidelines and of their responsibilities in protecting children.

Staff had created a happy, caring and inclusive environment to help families feel welcome. Parents were kept well informed about the work of the nursery through notice boards, informative newsletters and daily informal contact. Most parents who responded to surveys stated that they were happy with the service provided. Staff should make the information with regard to children's assessment profiles more readily available to parents. There were sound procedures in place with a wide range of associated primary schools to share information on children's achievements and learning.

Leading and improving the centre

Standard 14

The leadership of the nursery was very good. The head of service was hardworking, very supportive of staff and had fostered a strong sense of teamwork. She communicated effectively with staff, placing a strong emphasis on high-quality learning experiences for children. She was an effective practitioner and interacted well with children, providing a good role model for staff. With staff, the head of service had plans in place to improve and develop the service further. The head of service and staff were familiar with the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the requirements for registration.

All staff were involved in systematically evaluating the work of the nursery, leading to improvements in areas such as teamwork and communication. The head of service and senior early education workers monitored nursery practice and gave constructive feedback to staff.

Issues from previous inspections

Response to recommendations or to requirements or enforcement action made at previous inspection

At the last Care Commission singleton inspection there were four recommendations and one requirement. These had been addressed.

Recommendations for improvement

- Provide parents with regular information about children's development and progress.
- Monitor and track children's progress consistently.

As a result of the high performance, the strong record of improvement and the very effective leadership of this centre, HM Inspectors will make no further reports in connection with this inspection. The centre and the education authority have been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents. Within two years of the publication of this report the education authority, working with the centre, will provide a progress report to parents.

Myra Reid
HM Inspectorate of Education

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Care Commission

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