

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

21 June 2006

Tomintoul Primary School Nursery Class
Cults Drive
Tomintoul
Ballindalloch
AB37 9HA

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

Tomintoul 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. 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 15 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was nine.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery was located within the primary school building and provided a secure, bright and stimulating environment. The main playroom was comfortable and staff made good use of space for children to play both together and independently. The large outdoor play area was shared with primary school pupils and well used for energetic physical play. There were different areas for children to enjoy. Children had regular use of the school hall and the community library which was located in the school buildings.

Children's work was attractively displayed with photographs to reflect their nursery experiences. Play equipment was well maintained and children were effectively supervised by staff.

Staff had completed a range of written risk assessments to safeguard and promote children's welfare indoors. However, this was not the case for the outdoor play areas. The service had a comprehensive set of written policies, procedures and guidance to support best practice in relation to health and safety. Staff had not yet reviewed the accident record to ensure forms were signed by a parent.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had very positive, caring relationships with children. They knew the children very well and intervened effectively in their learning. Staff used questioning well and encouraged the children to talk about the work they had done. Staff discussed issues of interest with children, resulting in high-quality interactions.

Staff planned a very good range of experiences for children. Children influenced the programme greatly as staff listened, observed and responded to their learning needs. The

organisation and pace of the session enabled children to exercise choice and take responsibility for aspects of their learning. Children were motivated by and enjoyed activities such as the pirates' treasure chest where they were clearly relaxed and happy.

Arrangements for planning took good account of the early years curriculum. However, staff needed to streamline the recording of children's learning and focus on children's individual records. They maintained helpful folios of children's work. Staff recorded children's achievements and regularly shared this with parents.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for children's emotional, personal and social development was very good. Staff had created a very warm and positive atmosphere which allowed children to develop their sense of self esteem. Children were encouraged to be independent when changing to go outside. They were helpful at snack time. Children were making friends and were learning to share with each other. Children were interested in their learning and persevered as they completed more challenging activities such as jigsaws.
- Overall, the programme for children's communication and language development was good. Children listened and talked very well for a range of purposes. For example, they confidently contributed to group discussions. A few children needed more support to listen in a large group. Staff promoted an interest in reading through regular visits to the library, the librarian reading to them, and borrowing books. Children readily found reference books in the library. However, children did not make sufficient use of the nursery book corner or writing table. These areas were not sufficiently attractive to children. Some children recognised letters and sounds and many were able to write their own names. Staff did not provide sufficient opportunities for children to practise early reading and writing skills in their play.
- The programme for children's knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children were enthusiastically investigating and learning floating and sinking. They learned about their own and other cultures through their play and when celebrating festivals. Staff very effectively used resources within the local community to support children's learning about people who help us. Children were developing an understanding of time and enjoyed using timers. They had a good understanding of mathematics but did not have enough opportunities to use this in their play. The programme for information and communications technology (ICT) was not sufficiently well developed.
- The programme for children's expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to be creative. Staff valued children's work and took time to praise them. Children took pride in the baby cards they made. Their role-play was creative in a range of play activities. They invented characters and stories. Staff organised an attractive music corner for children to invent their own music. Children enjoyed singing together and sang tunefully.

- The programme for children's physical development and movement was very good. Staff ensured that children had daily access to outdoor play with wheeled toys and had developed rules for safety. They had weekly access to the school hall for physical activity. Children took part in an annual bowling programme to develop coordination skills. They had very good opportunities to develop fine control of fingers and hands through activities such as drawing, cutting, making jigsaws and using construction toys.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had formed positive relationships with parents. Parents received information about the nursery through a parents' handbook, notice boards and newsletters. Staff gave parents helpful advice on how they could support children's learning at home. They also organised formal meetings for parents to discuss children's progress. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with the work of the nursery. Parents were made welcome in the nursery and had good opportunities to talk to staff informally.

Individualised educational programmes were in place for children who needed additional support with their learning. Staff had a helpful policy to support children with additional learning needs. They liaised, as appropriate, with parents and other professionals to support children. Staff had a good understanding of how to support children but had not received recent training.

Nursery staff liaised with early stages teachers to ensure a smooth transition for children moving from nursery to P1. Information on children's progress was effectively shared with the receiving P1 teacher. Staff had established good links with a range of agencies.

Management

Standard 14

Overall, the leadership of the nursery was fair. The headteacher had recently returned to the nursery following a secondment to the education authority. The headteacher visited the nursery informally on a daily basis. She and the senior nursery nurse met regularly to discuss nursery issues informally. The senior nursery nurse was responsible for the day-to-day, smooth running of the nursery. She and the nursery assistant formed an enthusiastic team and the headteacher valued their work.

A comprehensive set of policies and procedures was in place. However, the nursery had not yet reviewed the behaviour management policy to include a comment on the use of restraint. Staff were aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection. Staff had experienced difficulties in being accepted for child protection courses and, as a result, not all had been able to attend relevant training in child protection.

The headteacher reviewed the development needs of staff and agreed future training. Staff were given the opportunity to access training to further their development. Staff were aware of the

Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the implications for their practice. The headteacher, together with staff, had evaluated the work of the nursery against national guidance in preparation for the next development plan. The headteacher had not established formal procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery. She now needed to work more closely with the nursery team to lead more effectively the process of self-evaluation in the nursery.

Key strengths

- Relaxed, happy and confident children.
- The quality of programmes in emotional, personal and social development, expressive and aesthetic development, and physical development and movement.
- The quality of relationships between the nursery team, parents and children.
- The commitment and enthusiasm of the nursery team.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

Recommendations and requirements from the last Care Commission inspection report had been met.

Recommendations for improvement

- Staff should carry out more detailed risk assessments of the school grounds.
- Staff should review accident forms to ensure that they are signed by parents.
- All staff should receive relevant child protection training.
- The headteacher and staff should work more closely with the nursery team and develop systematic procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery.

Requirements

- To further develop the behaviour management policy to include information relating to restraint.
This is to comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument 2002 number 114 Regulation 4 (1) (c) – requirement to make proper provision for health and welfare of service users.

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.

Gail Simcox
HM Inspectorate of Education