

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Balbeggie Primary School
Nursery Class
Perth and Kinross Council**

2 March 2005

**Balbeggie Primary School Nursery Class
Main Street
Balbeggie
Perth
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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

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.

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of the inspection or about this report you should write either to the Care Commission or to HM Inspectorate of Education at the address below. If you are still dissatisfied with our services, you can contact your member of the Scottish Parliament (or, if you prefer, any other MSP). You can also contact the Scottish Parliamentary Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and Agencies.

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Integrated Inspection by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education of Balbeggie Primary School Nursery Class Perth and Kinross Council

Introduction

Balbeggie Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in October 2004 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. An inspection of the primary school was carried out at the same time by HMIE and is the subject of a separate report. The nursery catered for pre-school children from age three to five years. At the time of the inspection the roll was 12.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery was situated in a classroom in the primary school. There was a door entry system for the nursery parents but it was not always secure as it was also used as an access route for the primary school during breaks. The layout of the nursery allowed children opportunity to work individually or in groups but in some areas resources were not carefully enough selected and were untidily presented. Equipment was clean and well maintained however, the carpet was badly stained. Good use was made of children's work for display. The toilet area was shared with the rest of the school.

The outside area was used by the rest of the school as well as the nursery and gave good opportunities for physical development and movement and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Appropriate measures were in place to control the spread of infection. Fire drills were carried out regularly and recorded appropriately.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had created a warm and welcoming atmosphere and had developed very good relationships with children. Staff made good use of praise to encourage children's confidence and self esteem. Staff effectively used questioning and interaction with children to extend and support learning. Some children's learning needed to be extended further with opportunity to solve problems, investigate and explore the environment. The nursery nurse regularly observed children's play and ensured profiles contained examples of work and photographic evidence of progress. Staff needed to make better use of the information

gathered to further development evaluations and planning for next steps.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was good. Children were happy and becoming more independent in personal tasks. Staff provided a variety of opportunities for children to develop positive attitudes and an awareness of other cultures. Children played cooperatively, shared resources and took turns appropriately. They were beginning to develop friendships. Children needed more opportunities to be challenged more appropriately in their tasks. Staff did not always give children enough time to persevere with difficult tasks.
- The programme for communication and language was good. Children listened well to adults and other children. They used language during role-play and in conversation to make sense of the world and to share their own experiences. Staff encouraged children's early writing skills at the writing table but made choice difficult by offering too many writing tools. Children used books to find information and showed some understanding of the language and layout of books. They showed enjoyment and responded enthusiastically during story time.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was good. Children learned about the local community through a range of well-planned visits and outings. Visitors to the nursery described the jobs of familiar people. Children's science skills were being developed through sand and water play. A display of autumnal materials created interest in the changing seasons. Children could identify and use numbers to ten. However, mathematical language needed to be developed within a context of play. Children needed more opportunities to undertake problem solving, investigation and experiments.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Staff provided a wide range of art and craft materials to allow children to represent their ideas and express their feelings. Staff provided good opportunities for children to listen to various types of music and to make music for themselves using percussion instruments. Children had regular opportunities to dance and move to music expressively in the school gym. Children used puppets and role-play imaginatively and freely.
- The very good programme for physical development and movement provided children with the opportunity to develop finger and hand control through a variety of activities including writing, cutting and using small construction toys. Daily use of the school gym allowed children to develop an awareness of space and to take part in energetic play. Children enjoyed very good use of the outdoor area in all weathers.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

The nursery offered good support to children and families and had developed positive relationships with children and parents. Staff were responsive to individual needs and circumstances. Parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with the work of the nursery. Parents received information about the nursery through informative newsletters and parents' meetings. The notice board did not include sufficient curricular information and detail about the work of the nursery. The entrance to the nursery did not allow parents ready access to information on the notice board.

Children with additional support needs were supported very well. Staff planned carefully to meet their individual needs and appropriate individualised educational programmes were in place. Parents and carers were involved appropriately in the process.

Particularly good procedures were in place to ease children's transition into P1 at Balbeggie Primary School, and the nursery had established strong links with other associated primary schools.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher and principal teacher, who had been in post for six weeks, were strongly committed to improving the nursery. The headteacher had responsibility for the nursery within the school. The nursery nurse ran the nursery on a daily basis. A peripatetic teacher supported the staff and helped develop the work of the nursery through fortnightly visits. The teacher and nursery nurse planned together effectively for long and medium term and the nursery nurse for the short term. The management team had expectations of high quality provision in the nursery. The headteacher had plans in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery formally, but clearer direction was needed to improve further the curriculum and children's learning experiences.

A good range of policies and procedures was in place. All staff were recruited in line with local authority procedures. Staff development and review was undertaken and plans were in place to ensure that training was in line with development plan needs. Staff were aware of child protection policy and procedures.

Nursery staff had undertaken some self-evaluation but needed further leadership from the headteacher to inform development planning and improve the nursery. Managers were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice.

Key strengths

- The very good support for children and families.
- The very good interaction between staff and children.
- The very good curricular programmes in expressive and aesthetic development and physical development and movement.

Other issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

Action had been taken to address the recommendation of the previous inspection.

Recommendations for improvement

- Headteacher and staff should continue to develop short-term planning to include evaluations of learning outcomes to be used to inform next steps in learning.
- The headteacher should continue to develop a focused approach to monitoring to ensure it is rigorous and systematic and brings continued improvement to the service.
- Staff should plan activities to ensure appropriate challenge and further extend children's learning.
- The school and local authority should improve the flooring within the playroom, and develop the nursery entrance to give parents a waiting area.

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.

Margaret Stirling
HM Inspectorate of Education