

**Integrated Inspection by the
Care Commission and
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Tullos Primary School
Nursery Class
Aberdeen City Council**

31 August 2005

**Tullos Primary School Nursery Class
Girdleness Road
Aberdeen
AB11 8FJ**

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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Introduction

Tullos Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in May 2005 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. At the time of the inspection the roll was 40.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery formed part of Tullos Primary School. The two playrooms were bright and spacious and had examples of children's work displayed in the play room and nursery entrance. The playrooms were well laid out to provide areas for the children to learn and play independently or as part of a group. The nursery had a separate entrance which was fitted with an appropriate security system. The two playrooms shared toilets which were located between the two rooms. However, there were not enough toilets and sinks for the number of children that had access to them.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was accessible from the playrooms and provided additional play space for the children. Children from one playroom made good use of this space with opportunities for physical play and a variety of outdoor activities. Staff needed to review the safety of the school play ground and field to ensure that it is suitable for use by the nursery children during shared playtimes.

A wide range of equipment and resources was available and suitable for the children attending the nursery. The equipment was clean and well maintained.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Staff had very good relationships with children and they responded sensitively to children's needs. Activities were well planned to meet the needs of all children. There was a good balance between activities children could choose for themselves and those directed by adults. Staff interacted very effectively with children to promote thinking and extend their learning. Staff valued and encouraged children's contributions. Children were given the time and space to enjoy and explore a wide range of activities. They were challenged, stimulated and actively involved in the learning process.

Staff plans set out clearly what they expected the children to learn. Staff observed and recorded children's learning. However, they needed to review this system to make it more manageable and to more clearly identify children's progress. Staff informed parents of children's progress through informal discussions and a helpful, annual written report.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Staff had created a positive and caring environment. Children were very happy and confident and knew the nursery rules. Children responded well to praise. They were very confident and well behaved. Children were considerate of each other and were able to take turns and share resources. They persevered with more challenging tasks such as completing games and jigsaws. Children were independent and organised themselves well at snack, tidy time and changing to go out.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. The children listened well to adults and to each other and made appropriate contributions during discussions. They were able to express themselves very well and talk about their interests and experiences. Most children listened attentively to stories. Staff made effective use of labels and signs around the nursery. The home-school teacher organised story sacks for the children to take home to promote an interest in books. Children were developing a good awareness of letter sounds. They had many opportunities to develop early writing skills in their role-play and at the writing table.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Children observed changes in seasons through outside play. One group were investigating the soil by digging in the garden and were fascinated as they examined worms using magnifying glasses. Children had a very good understanding of growth and discussed this in their role-play in the 'garden centre'. They were developing an understanding of people's roles through their play in the 'vet's surgery'. Children were developing very good mathematical skills such as counting, measuring and sorting, which they applied during their play.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was good. Children invented stories, and expressed themselves very well in imaginative role-play. Staff interacted very effectively to extend children's role-play. Children had very good opportunities to create and express their thoughts and feelings through a range of art activities. However, some activities were overly adult led. A visiting music specialist provided additional musical experiences for children. Children enjoyed singing and sang tunefully.
- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Staff planned for weekly gym lessons in the hall. Children enjoyed very good outdoor physical play, particularly those attending the nursery full time. Children were developing confidence in climbing. Children in their pre-school year shared morning playtime with the P1-3 pupils

in the summer term. They were confident in the larger play area and enjoyed the experience. Children were developing good control of their fingers and hands using a wide range of equipment such as the writing materials, play dough, jigsaws and construction toys.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff had established effective links with a wide range of support agencies and worked with other professionals to ensure the individual needs of children were met. Staff met with other staff from establishments that offered shared care to children attending the nursery. Additional staffing had been allocated to provide support for these children. Individualised educational programmes (IEPS) were in place but did not contain specific, realistic targets linked to planning. Staff needed to involve parents more in this process.

A home-school teacher was in post and worked very well with parents and children in a number of initiatives. These included story sacks and a book library for the children. Staff organised workshops for parents and carers. Parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied with most aspects of the work of the nursery. A few wished for more information on the work of the nursery. However, parents spoken with during the inspection were happy with the service and stated that staff were approachable and supportive. Staff made time available daily for discussion with parents and to exchange information. The nursery had effective transition links with primary. They organised parents' meetings and classroom visits for children and parents of children moving to P1.

Management

Standard 14

Overall, the centre provided effective leadership. The headteacher had delegated responsibility for the nursery to the deputy headteacher. The deputy headteacher had a clear vision for the future development of the nursery. She demonstrated good professional knowledge and skills and an understanding of childcare issues. She was taking forward new ideas and models in her practice. The deputy headteacher had a teaching commitment within the nursery. However, time for monitoring of classroom practice of staff was limited and as a result was not rigorous enough. The headteacher should review the remit of the deputy headteacher and, where possible, provide extra time for monitoring.

Nursery staff from the two playrooms met separately to plan and evaluate provision. Joint discussion and training was available on in-service days. Staff did not appear to be working together effectively and needed to develop greater team work throughout the nursery. Staff had used a parental questionnaire to gather views of the service.

Policies and procedures, including a child protection policy, were in place for the service. Staff were clear about their role in relation to child protection. The school had not received information about the Scottish Social Service Council Codes of Practice.

Key strengths

- Happy, confident children.
- The breadth and quality of the curriculum programmes.
- The quality of interaction between staff and children.
- The development of the home-school teacher.

Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

One recommendation was made at the last Care Commission Inspection in May 2004. The recommendation was to ensure that parents were able to access the complaints procedure. This was now available in the entrance to the nursery with other nursery policies.

Recommendations for improvement

- The headteacher should review the remit of the depute headteacher and, where possible, provide extra time for monitoring.
- To prepare a plan to provide improved toilet provision for the nursery 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.

Claire Capstick
Care Commission

Gail Simcox
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