

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

31 August 2005

Coupar Angus Primary School Nursery Class
School Road
Coupar Angus
Perthshire
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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 Coupar Angus Primary School Nursery Class Perth and Kinross Council

Introduction

Coupar Angus Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in February 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 60.

The environment

Standard 2

The nursery was located in two classrooms within the primary school building. The classrooms were linked via a vestibule area which also served as the main entrance to the nursery. The accommodation provided a safe, secure and stimulating environment. Staff used space effectively, enabling children to play and work both independently and in small groups in each room. There was direct access to the outdoor play area and garden. These areas were safely laid out with very good play and physical activity choices for all children. The nursery shared toilet facilities with the primary classes. The headteacher and the local authority were exploring alternative arrangements. In the meantime, the current arrangements were well managed by nursery staff.

The nursery had a very good range of safe and clean play resources. These were easily accessed by children and encouraged choice and independence. Staff were aware of infection control policies. Health and safety policies complied with current regulatory requirements. Risk assessments of the accommodation and equipment were appropriately carried out as required.

Quality of children's experience

Standard 4 & 5

Children in the nursery were happy, relaxed and familiar with daily routines. Staff knew the children very well and were warm and caring towards them. They praised children's contributions during group discussions and developed their confidence and self esteem. In both rooms staff organised a very good range of activities. There was a good balance of activities between those that children could choose for themselves and those directed by adults. The outdoor area was available all day. Detailed planning by staff took very good account of the children's interests and the changing seasons. Children also planned their activities for the day using a choosing board. Outdoor and indoor activities covered all areas of the curriculum. For example,

children made hangings on the garden fence as an art and craft activity and books were available outside for children who wanted a quiet time. All staff observed and recorded children's progress well and used the information to support and develop children's learning.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children showed consideration for others and shared tools and equipment well. They were developing independence and self esteem. They were making and expressing choices. Children served themselves at snack time, confidently accessing fruit and drinks whilst socialising with friends at the table. They were learning to plan activities and find solutions to problems. For example, by working together they were able to prevent equipment blowing across the playground on windy days. Children and staff took responsibility for their environment and had initiated the nursery and school's Eco Project.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Staff used stories effectively to develop children's listening and talking skills. Children listened very well to adults and other children during play activities. They talked confidently about themselves and their experiences. Children anticipated and predicted events in stories read to them. They enjoyed selecting books from the range available. They used expressive language to describe items on display around the nursery and when talking about photographs of nursery events. They were developing an awareness of letter names and sounds. A visit from a police officer had stimulated the use of notebooks and pencils to practise writing.
- The programme for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Staff made effective use of visitors and outings in the local community including trips to the fire station, parks and café. The active schools coordinator supported safe walks in the countryside. As a result, children were developing good knowledge of people and places. They used their senses well and actively explored, experimented and investigated the outdoor environment. They used the school garden and were learning about life cycles of plants and flowers. Children prepared food for the birds and observed the types of birds arriving in the garden. They recognised patterns and shapes around them and sorted natural objects into various groups. Children were learning to count and measure. They were developing good skills in information and communications technology (ICT) and many could use the mouse to select options on the computer monitor.
- The programme in expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Children expressed themselves well in paintings and models. Their art work was well displayed around the nursery. Children had access to a wide range of materials and confidently selected from these to create a picture for the Chinese New Year celebrations. They had used a computer drawing package to draw and print out pictures. Children joined in singing games and experimented

with musical instruments. They worked together to make a dragon dance and used puppets to re-tell adventures of characters from a favourite book.

- The programme in physical development and movement was very good. Staff made very effective use of both the indoor and outdoor learning environments to develop children's physical skills. Children enjoyed fresh air every day and could engage in a range of energetic activities outdoors. They could run, jump and skip with increasing confidence and used wheeled toys to manoeuvre around the play area. They balanced on boards and benches and persevered when trying to walk on flower pot stilts. They also had regular access to the school gym. Children were developing very good control of their fingers and hands through using a range of equipment including scissors, hammers and other tools. They cooperated very well with others in physical play and, overall, made very good use of all available space.

Support for children and families

Standard 6

Staff knew children and families very well. They responded sensitively to children's individual circumstances and provided effective support when needed. Parents were kept very well informed about nursery life through useful leaflets and newsletters available in a range of languages. All parents who responded to nursery questionnaires were very satisfied with the work of the nursery. Staff shared regular written progress reports with parents and had very good links with school staff to ensure effective transition to P1 classes.

The headteacher and staff provided very good support for children with additional needs. Staff were well briefed on how to support individual conditions and knew what to do to protect children in their care. The nursery had links with a range of agencies and professionals to help them meet children's needs including support for families for whom English was an additional language.

Management

Standard 14

The headteacher had overall responsibility for the management of the nursery. She demonstrated very good leadership qualities. She communicated well with staff from the nursery as well as parents and carers of children attending the nursery.

The nursery teacher had responsibility for the day-to-day management of the nursery and was very effective in this role. She was both innovative and creative in her work and ensured a high quality of experience for the children. The nursery staff were caring and approachable and had fostered very good relationships with parents. They were highly committed and worked very well as a team.

There were good systems in place to monitor the work of the nursery. The headteacher and nursery teacher provided good feedback to staff on their work. A system of staff review was in place. All staff were engaged in evaluating the nursery.

Parents, carers and children made a full contribution to the life and work of the nursery, including assistance in fund-raising.

Their views and comments were taken into consideration in evaluating provision and planning future development.

The headteacher was aware of the Scottish Social Services Council's responsibility to register and regulate the social service workforce and to develop the codes of practice for social service workers and for employers of social service workers. The service holds a copy of the Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers and Code of Practice for Social Services Workers. The Care Commission has a statutory responsibility to take account of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice in its registration and inspection of care services.

Key strengths

- The very effective relationships between children, parents and staff.
- The very good programmes in each of the five key aspects of children's learning and their positive impact on children's progress and development.
- The very good emphasis given to taking children's learning outdoors.
- The very good support for children and families in meeting individual needs.
- The innovative and committed staff team.
- The leadership and management of the nursery by the headteacher and nursery teacher.

Recommendations for improvement

- To continue to provide quality experiences for all children and maintain the high standards set.

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.

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