

**Integrated Inspection by the  
Care Commission and  
HM Inspectorate of Education of  
Tarland Primary School  
Nursery Class  
Aberdeenshire Council**

**25 January 2006**

**Tarland Primary School Nursery Class**  
**School Road**  
**Tarland**  
**Aberdeenshire**  
**AB34 4UU**

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.

<b>National Care Standard</b>	<b>Child at the Centre Quality Indicator</b>
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 acting headteacher, staff and the education authority. Copies are also available on the Care Commission website: [www.carecommission.com](http://www.carecommission.com) and HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://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](mailto:enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: [www.scottishombudsman.org.uk](http://www.scottishombudsman.org.uk).

A copy of the HMIE complaints procedure is available from the HMIE website at [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01506 600 258.

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# **Integrated Inspection by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education of Tarland Primary School Nursery Class Aberdeenshire Council**

## **Introduction**

Tarland Primary School Nursery Class was inspected in October 2005 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 20 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 11.

## **The environment**

### **Standard 2**

The nursery class was accommodated within the primary school and was in a good state of repair. Premises and some resources were shared with the local playgroup which used the room most afternoons. Children were cared for in a safe, hygienic and stimulating environment. Appropriate procedures were in place to ensure the children's security. Risk assessments had been developed and staff demonstrated an awareness of safety issues.

The nursery provided good space for children to play. Staff had organised the playroom to provide children with opportunities to play independently or in groups. Artwork was attractively displayed but needed to be arranged at children's level. An enclosed grassed outdoor play park was located close to the nursery and was well used by the children. The nursery had timetabled use of the school gym hall. Children had access to a range of attractive and appropriate resources which were clean and well maintained. Appropriate measures were taken to control the spread of infection.

## **Quality of children's experience**

### **Standard 4 & 5**

Staff provided a very welcoming environment and had very positive relationships with children and their families. They encouraged and praised children's contributions, building their confidence and self esteem. They interacted very well with children and made very good use of questions and dialogue to extend and support children's development and learning.

Staff provided a good balance of free and more structured activity. A few children needed a wider range of activities and greater challenge. Most children concentrated well on their play. Staff planned carefully to take account of children's individual needs. They had introduced personal learning plans for each

child and used assessments and observations to successfully plan for next steps in children's learning.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were happy, confident and secure. They were beginning to form good friendships with one another. They were comfortable with routines and simple rules. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to develop independence and take responsibility. Staff sensitively supported their cooperative play and helped them to resolve conflicts themselves.
- The programme for communication and language was good. Staff provided a range of opportunities for children to develop their skills in listening, talking and reading. Children listened well and talked confidently about their experiences. They were able to follow instructions and information from adults. They used travel reference books and atlases independently as part of their play experiences. Most children could recognise their own name in print. Staff did not provide a wide enough range of opportunities to encourage children's early writing skills in play contexts.
- The very good programme for developing knowledge and understanding of the world provided opportunities for children to learn about technology, science, information and communications technology and mathematics. Children used their senses to explore and investigate sand, water, very wet dough and autumn materials. They were learning about woodland animals and their habitats. They designed and made travelling machines in their block play, solving simple problems cooperatively. They were learning about the world through information books and pictorial atlases. Children used the computer programmes with confidence. They were developing understanding and knowledge of mathematical processes including counting, sorting, matching and measuring.
- The programme for expressive aesthetic development was good. Staff provided good opportunities for children to express themselves freely in their art and craft work. Children were absorbed in their role-play sailing across rough seas to 'hot country' destinations. Staff did not provide enough opportunities for children to use musical instruments, to experiment with sound, make music, dance or sing.
- The programme for physical development was very good. Children were able to manipulate scissors, small tools and small construction toys confidently. They enjoyed energetic activity in the gym and general purpose room every week. They had daily access to a grassed play park where they were developing skills in running, jumping, balancing and sliding.

## **Support for children and families**

### **Standard 6**

Staff had developed good relationships with children and families. They kept parents informed of activities and procedures through newsletters, a well-organised notice board and informative parents' handbook. Almost all parents who responded to the

pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with the work of the nursery.

There was a well-planned programme of induction for children transferring from the playgroup to nursery and from nursery to primary school. Information on children's progress was shared with parents and with the receiving staff. Parents and staff had regular opportunities to meet on an informal as well as a formal basis. Staff had a good understanding of procedures for supporting children with additional support needs. Staff had not yet developed effective links with outside agencies.

## **Management**

### **Standard 14**

In the short time in post, the acting headteacher demonstrated effective leadership of the nursery. She was approachable, open and supportive towards staff, parents and children. She had worked very well with the new supply teacher and experienced nursery nurse to create an effective team. The teacher carried out her responsibility for the day-to-day running of the nursery very well. Appropriate policies had been developed in consultation with staff and shared with parents.

All staff were qualified and recruited in line with local authority guidelines. They had a good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to the protection of children but had not yet undertaken child protection training. They were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and its implications for them. No staff member, including the acting headteacher, had participated in a professional review. However, informal discussions were held between the acting headteacher and staff to identify training needs and appropriate courses.

The acting headteacher and staff had made a very good start to using national indicators of performance to evaluate children's learning experiences and improve their own practice. They had consulted parents about the quality of provision and, where appropriate, had included action in the school development plan. They were making good progress in implementing appropriate development planning priorities. The acting headteacher should now build on this good practice to introduce a programme of formal visits to nursery to monitor the quality of children's experiences more effectively.

## **Key Strengths**

- The very good programmes for emotional, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development and movement.
- The very good relationships with children and families.
- The helpful procedures for assessment and reporting.
- Effective teamwork between the acting headteacher and nursery staff.
- Commitment and determination of the acting headteacher to improving the service.

## **Other Issues**

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

There was one requirement from the previous annual Care Commission inspection which had been met in full. Appropriate action had been taken to address recommendations outstanding from the singleton report, 22 January 2004.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- As planned, the acting headteacher should work closely with staff to formalise and implement a more systematic and rigorous procedure for monitoring and evaluating the work of the nursery.
- The local authority should work with the acting headteacher to formalise procedures for professional review.
- Staff should undertake child protection training.

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.

Pat Appleby  
HM Inspectorate of Education