

**Chapter One Childcare
Gilmerton
Edinburgh
11 November 2009**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects centres in order to let parents¹, children and the local community know whether their centre provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with centre staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the head of centre and staff about the strengths of the centre, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into playrooms and join other activities which children are involved in. We also gather the views of parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the centre. We describe how well children are doing, how good the centre is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the centre. We also comment on how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the centre is led and how all staff help the centre achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals. Where applicable, you will also be able to find descriptions of good practice in the centre.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends

Contents

1. The centre
2. Particular strengths of the centre
3. Examples of good practice
4. How well do children learn and achieve?
5. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?
6. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?
7. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?
8. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?
9. What happens next?

1. The centre

Chapter One Childcare was inspected in September 2009 by HMIE on behalf of both HMIE and the Care Commission as part of the integrated inspection programme. The centre caters for pre-school children aged from birth to five years. It is registered for 42 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 56 at the time of the inspection. There are 16 children in their pre-school year.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Children who are highly motivated and enthusiastic.
- Staff's level of care for children in baby and toddler rooms.
- Staff's teamwork in providing a stimulating and supportive learning environment.
- Leadership of the owner, manager and depute manager.

3. Example of good practice

- Staff news - something good to shout about.

4. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children in the baby room are very settled. They are developing their senses as they explore the environment. They respond well to adults and others with appropriate gestures and early language. They interact well with each other and are at the early stages of taking turns and sharing when playing. Children in the toddler room are enthusiastic and confident when using equipment. They listen well and enjoy talking about what they are doing. A few children are aware of early number and can identify a few shapes.

In the nursery, children in their pre-school year achieve a high level of success in their learning. They are highly motivated and confident

when choosing activities. They are developing their investigative skills in early science very well and can use a simple microscope to examine their findings. Most are competent in using the computer to access literacy and numeracy programmes to support their learning.

Children, aged three to five, are making very good progress in all aspects of their learning. They listen to and carry out instructions well. Children pay good attention to stories and when using listening centres independently. They talk very well with each other and with adults, for example when sharing and explaining their science experiments. Most can read their name and are beginning to recognise a few sounds, letters and words. They are developing their skills in early writing. Children are confident in attempting to write sounds, their name and stories. Most have a very good understanding of early number and enjoy using numbers in different play situations. They are aware of early mathematical language and use it appropriately when playing.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff are developing the curriculum for younger children appropriately in line with the national *Birth to Three* guidance. Children have very good opportunities for exploring their environment both indoors and outdoors. Staff provide children with stimulating and enjoyable activities such as dance and music which are developing successfully children's early communication skills. They are ensuring through various activities that children are developing their early mark making and writing skills. Staff provide pre-school aged children with quality learning experiences. Children have very good opportunities to practise early literacy and numeracy skills in appropriate play situations. Their investigative skills are being developed through very good science activities. Staff support children's learning very well. They now need to develop their questioning skills further to challenge children's thinking more. Children take part in a range of experiences which develop their creativity in many ways, for example in drama, dance, art and design and role-play. Staff ensure that children take part in relevant experiences which allow them to gain knowledge about

changes brought about by seasons, festivals and the importance of recycling. Children have good opportunities to play and learn outdoors, but they do not have free flow access to these areas. Currently, staff are reviewing and implementing changes in the curriculum in line with the national *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Staff are very good at meeting children's learning needs. They are extremely focused on enabling children to be confident and successful in their learning. Staff plan and deliver a range of interesting play experiences which are meeting children's learning needs. They support children very well, ensuring that they make progress. Staff monitor children's progress and plan appropriately for what they will learn next. Their level of care, particularly for babies, is of a high quality. Staff are extremely responsive to babies' developmental and learning needs.

5. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?

Staff work well with others to support children's learning, including people and services within the community, for example the library, police and fire service. The nursery encourages parents very well to be involved in their children's learning. Parents spend time in playrooms, share in children's 'All about me' books and contribute to personal learning planning arrangements. Staff also share recipes, songs and activities with parents which children enjoy doing in nursery. Parents receive information about their children's progress. Throughout the year, children are involved effectively in various fundraising activities which has led to productive links with different organisations. Through this work, children are learning about others' needs. They recently raised a considerable amount of money for Breast Cancer research. The nursery has systems in place to deal with complaints.

6. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?

Staff work extremely well as a team. They are aware of the need for continuous improvement of the nursery. They know the identified improvement plan priorities and their role in taking these forward. For example, the manager and pre-school staff are planning and implementing new guidance for health and wellbeing in line with advice contained in *Curriculum for Excellence*. Staff have helpful opportunities to discuss and develop their practice through regular meetings with managers. Children are involved in nursery developments. However, staff need to involve them more, for example in developing different growing areas outdoors.

7. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?

Within the nursery, staff have established a positive, caring and supportive learning environment where children are treated with equality and fairness. Staff know the arrangements for keeping children safe. They use praise and encouragement appropriately. They give children the respect they deserve, which results in children displaying very good behaviour. Children's wellbeing is promoted through building relationships, encouraging them to eat healthily and knowing the importance of looking after themselves.

8. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?

The owner, manager and depute manager have a very clear focus on developing the work of the nursery. The manager and depute manager provide very good support and encouragement to staff in all aspects of their practice. Together, they have created a team approach among staff which is having a very positive impact on children's learning experiences.

9. What happens next?

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the centre, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its centre.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- Develop staff's questioning skills to improve further children's learning experiences.
- Review how the outdoor area can be used and accessed more freely by children.
- Continue to take forward their plans for developing the curriculum in line with national guidance.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the centre there were three recommendations. All have since been addressed.

Quality indicators help centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a centre. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish centres are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Chapter One Nursery .

Improvements in performance	very good
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	very good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

Managing Inspector: Gordon Buchanan
11 November 2009

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means	outstanding, sector leading
very good	means	major strengths
good	means	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	means	major weaknesses

If you would like to find out more about our inspections or get an electronic copy of this report, please go to www.hmie.gov.uk.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation, or if you wish to comment about any aspect of our inspections. You can contact us at HMIEenquiries@hmie.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Text phone users can contact us on 01506 600 236. This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as the line will not connect you to a member of staff.

You can find our complaints procedure on our website www.hmie.gov.uk or alternatively you can contact our Complaints Manager, at the address above or by telephoning 01506 600259.

You can also contact the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, telephone 0845 603 0890.

Crown Copyright 2009
HM Inspectorate of Education