Inspection report

Port Erroll School Nursery
Day Care of Children
Braehead Drive
Cruden Bay    AB42 0NP

Inspected by:    Elaine Ward
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection:    Unannounced

Inspection completed on:    22 May 2008
Service Number: CS2003015717

Service name: Port Erroll School Nursery

Service address: Braehead Drive
Cruden Bay    AB42 0NP

Provider Number: SP2003000029

Provider Name: Aberdeenshire Council

Inspected By: Elaine Ward
Care Commission Officer

Inspection Type: Unannounced

Inspection Completed: 22 May 2008

Period since last inspection: 14 months

Local Office Address:
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Introduction
Port Erroll School Nursery, a local authority service, was deemed registered to provide care for children of pre-school age on 1 April 2002. The service can provide care for up to a maximum of 25 pre-school children at any one session in the nursery area.

At the time of the inspection, nine children were present and being cared for by one teacher and one qualified nursery nurse. The nursery’s aim is to "Provide a well-planned, broad and balanced range of relevant, challenging experiences and opportunities which are responsive to the children's individual needs and help them to learn through play".

Based on the findings of this inspection the service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good
Quality of Environment - Grade 6 - Excellent
Quality of Staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This inspection report and grades represent the Care Commission’s assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. Please refer to the care services register on the Care Commission’s website (www.carecommission.com) for the most up-to-date grades for this service.

Basis of Report
Before the Inspection

The Annual Return

The service submitted a completed Annual Return as requested by the Care Commission.

Annual returns (AR’s) are used to ensure that the Care Commission has up to date and accurate. The information provided will also be used in the Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) process to determine how services will be inspected.

An AR must be submitted every year by all registered services. Care services are obliged by law to provide us with the information requested in the AR (The Regulation of Care Act (Scotland) 2001, Section 25(1)). The provider had from 1 January 2008 to 29 February 2008 in which to return the AR to the Care Commission.

The service submitted a completed electronic Annual Return as requested by the Care Commission on 14 February 2008.

The Self-Assessment Form

The service submitted a self-evaluation form as requested by the Care Commission. This contained information from the nursery teacher regarding where she saw the strengths of the service and had identified a number of areas for improvement for all quality themes, giving a timescale when they should meet them.
Views of service users

Time was spent with a number of service users aged between 3 and 5 years during the inspection process.

Regulation Support Assessment

This service was inspected after a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) was carried out to determine the intensity of the inspection necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the Care Commission Officer (CCO) which considers: complaints activity, changes in the provision of the service, nature of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service (such as absence of a manager) and action taken upon requirements. The CCO will also have considered how the service responded to situations and issues as part of the RSA.

This assessment resulted in this service receiving a low RSA score and so a low intensity inspection was required. The inspection was based on the relevant Inspection Focus Areas and associated National Care Standards, recommendations and requirements from previous inspections and complaints or other regulatory activity. This will include a sample/grade of a service user quality statement from each Quality Theme and a sample/grade of IFA’s and one additional Quality Statement(s) in each Theme.

During the inspection process

Staff at inspection

The inspection was carried out by one Care Commission Officer. In-depth discussions took place with the nursery teacher, nursery nurse and student teacher on placement in the service.

Evidence

During inspection, evidence was gathered from a number of sources including:

Discussion with one parent/carer during the inspection
Discussion with service users during the inspection process

An examination of a range of policies, procedures, records and other documentation, including the following:

Aims and objectives
Child protection policy
Confidentiality policy
Seven child profiles
Risk assessments
2 x Staff training records
Accident and incident record
Team meeting minutes
Planning documentation
Quality assurance policy
Development plan
Partnership with parents policy
Equal opportunity policy
Whistle blowing policy
Complaints policy
Child at the centre assessment

Observation of staff practice
Examination of the environment and equipment

All of the above information and observations were taken into account during the inspection process.

Inspection Focus Areas and associated National Care Standards for 2007/08

In line with this year’s inspection methodology, the IFA has a number of key questions which will inform how the relevant Quality Theme is being met.

Fire Safety Issues

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 introduced new regulatory arrangements in respect of fire safety, on 1 October 2006. In terms of those arrangements, responsibility for enforcing the statutory provisions in relation to fire safety now lies with the Fire and Rescue service for the area in which a care service is located. Accordingly, the Care Commission will no longer report on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function, but, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Further advice on your responsibilities is available at www.infoscotland.com/firelaw.

Action taken on requirements since last Inspection
There were no requirements made at the last inspection carried out in February 2007.

Comments on Self Assessment
The QAF self assessment had been carried out thoroughly by the nursery staff. A few of areas for development had been identified.

View of Service Users
Children attending the service were happy, confident and very well mannered at all times during the inspection. They thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of play especially physical opportunities either indoors or out.

Children made the following comments during the inspection;
"We enjoy going to the village hall"
"We go to assembly with our teachers"
"The teachers decide what snack we are going to get. We have a choice and we say yes or no".

View of Carers
Nine questionnaires were returned to the Care Commission prior to the inspection taking place. Parents/carers commented;
"The quality of communication is particularly good at this nursery"
“Staff are consistently approachable and offer private space and time for discussion when requested”
“Staff are excellent at giving confidence and encouraging positive interaction”
“Staff have worked hard to meet healthy eating standards and have been excellent in taking parents wishes into account”
“The service is very well maintained, clean and welcoming”
“I am more than happy with my child’s nursery school. It is excellent and the staff are brilliant. You can tell that they care about the children as it shows in the way that they deal with them.”
Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service Strengths

The service had in place a "partnership with parents" policy which was on display with other policies within the cloakroom area for parents/carers to read.

They had implemented several ways of involving parents, carers and children in the service including: parents meetings, questionnaires, transition meetings with parents/carers and children. Prior to this inspection all parents/carers were issued with all of the quality themes and statements allowing them to make comments and score the service provision. The majority of the parents completed and returned the paperwork with all who did, "scoring" the service a 6 which relates to excellent.

All parents/carers within the nursery were invited to join the parent council which was recently established January 2008. This gives all parents/carers an opportunity to share their views and become more actively involved with the service.

Nine questionnaires were returned before the inspection took place, six parents/carers stated that they were aware that they could become involved in the service. During the inspection, one parent was present during part of the morning session and one parent during the afternoon session. Parents stated that they were made very welcome into the service. All parents/carers who returned questionnaires prior to the inspection stated that they were very happy with the service provision. One comment from a parent/carer was "I have the pleasure of being a parent volunteer and enjoy the fact that the nursery makes good use of the involvement of parents".

Areas for Development

It was evident that the provider and staff involved the children and encouraged them to make choices and decisions regarding their day to day life in the service. The service provider now needs to formalise the process and record and audit the children's views and opinions regarding the service. (see recommendation 1)

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Statement 3: We ensure that service user's health and wellbeing needs are met.
Service Strengths

The service had in place various policies, procedures and risk assessments to ensure the safety of the children attending. All staff were involved in the weekly planning to ensure all of the children's individual needs were being assessed and met.

Observations and discussions with staff evidenced that the service ensured children had a caring, healthy and active lifestyle while attending the service.

Both staff had attended an elementary food hygiene and toothnology course. Observation and discussion with children throughout the inspection evidenced that healthy snacks were provided daily and children were encouraged to try new healthy foods. A pictorial and written snack menu was on display for the children to see in advance and all children attending during the inspection were aware of the routine at snack time. Children were offered a choice of milk or water during snack times and were encouraged to be independent.

Toothbrushing had been implemented in the service and children were observed to be familiar with it. Oral health policy guidelines were adhered to with staff having recently taken on the responsibility of cleaning and maintenance of the toothbrushing programme.

An infection control policy was in place within the service. A varied range of health related leaflets were displayed within the cloakroom area for parents/carers to access at their leisure.

The self assessment form and discussions with staff identified that strong relationships had been developed and maintained with a range of health and social care professionals.

Both staff had recently attended training in child protection procedures. Through discussion with staff, they demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of the procedure relating to child protection issues within the service. The head teacher was identified as the contact person within the school for reporting child protection issues. A range of appropriate policies and procedures were found to be in place to support practice. These included child protection policies, the North East of Scotland Child Protection guidelines and framework standards for child protection. Eight out of the nine parents/carers who returned questionnaires before the inspection was completed were aware of the child protection policy and procedure that was in place in the service. The child protection statement, in large print was on display within the cloakroom area of the service.

Areas for Development

Once again it was evident that staff involved children in all aspects of the service. Children are starting to become more involved with the preparation, selecting and purchasing of snacks. Staff now need to formalise, record and evaluate the introduction and progress of the children participating more fully in the snacks routine.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0
Number of Recommendations

0
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service Strengths

Parents and carers had been made aware of the new inspection and the self assessment process and were all given an opportunity to participate with the self evaluation of all aspects the service.

Parental questionnaires provided some opportunities for the parents and carers to comment on the environment. All nine who returned questionnaires stated that the environment was safe and secure.

Newsletters were issued at least monthly and involved the whole school. At the time of the inspection, the environment was observed to be very clean with seven parents/carers stating that they were very happy with the cleanliness of the service.

The service had in place a visitor's book available for all visitors to sign in and out of the service ensuring additional safety within the service.

Areas for Development

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 2: We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected

Service Strengths

The service is accommodated in an award winning, purpose built primary school. The accommodation was observed to be very safe and secure. A door entry system was fitted with all visitors signing in at the office. Suitable access was available for all parents/carers and children with additional support needs.

A secure outdoor area was identified and used solely for children attending the nursery. This area was accessible from the nursery area and was used and enjoyed during the inspection.
by the children attending the afternoon session. Generic risk assessments were in place for the premises, outdoors and specific activities.

Procedures were in place to ensure a clean and safe environment was being maintained. Parents/carers commented that "this is an extremely clean, safe and secure facility" and "the service is very well maintained, clean and welcoming".

Where staff in the service were responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of various resources, schedules were up to date and on display. All areas of the service were observed to be well maintained, clean and tidy.

Both staff and children practised good hand washing procedures and were observed throughout the inspection. Posters as visual reminders were on display in the children's toilets which were within the nursery area.

Staff displayed children's work attractively around the nursery area. The main area where children accessed was well organised and allowed children to move freely around the room. Resources were well maintained, suitable for the age group attending and were at the appropriate height for a child to access independently. Displays and interest tables were linked to planning and evidenced that children's interests were taken account of. During the inspection children were studying "mini beasts" and lots of information was available around the nursery for them to discover and investigate various kinds of "mini beasts". Parents/carers were also actively encouraged to become involved in the various topics that the service had chosen investigating. Children were very enthusiastic about their current topic of mini beasts.

Areas for Development

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0
Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service Strengths

Parents/carers within the service were provided with various opportunities to assess and make comment about the quality of staffing.

Parents and carers had been made aware of the new inspection and the self assessment process and were all given an opportunity to participate with the self evaluation of all aspects the service including staffing.

All parents/carers within the nursery were invited to join the parent council which was recently established January 2008. This gives all parents/carers an additional opportunity to share their views and become more actively involved with the service.

Information and photographs of staff were displayed within the cloakroom area of the service.

Areas for Development

The service provider should begin to look at ways of involving parents/ carers in the recruitment and selection of staff. (see recommendation 2)

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Statement 3: We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service Strengths

The service provider had in place policies and procedures relating to recruitment, child protection, whistleblowing and confidentiality. Also in place was a continuing professional development policy which promoted the service’s commitment to ensuring the continuous professional development of staff. Staff had been given the opportunity to attend statutory and non - statutory training events either in-house or through external organisations. The following training had been attended by either one or both members of staff; food handling (refresher), helping children talk, autism, how to talk and listen to children and speech and language. Examination of both staff's personal portfolios evidenced training attended and
applied for.

At the time of the inspection, both staff were very experienced and very well qualified to meet the needs of the children attending. Both staff had been employed at the service for a number of years ensuring continuity of care for the children.

The nursery nurse had completed her registration as a practitioner with the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC) and was aware of the criteria for registration with the council.

The student teacher on placement at the service discussed her involvement in all aspects of the service provision. She stated that she had received an induction and orientation of the service.

Positive teamwork was observed during the inspection and staff worked hard and were motivated. Weekly staff meetings took place within the whole service provision. Minutes of meetings were recorded and cascaded down to other staff not attending. Staff ensured that evidence related to the inspection themes and statements were available to the Care Commission Officer (CCO).

Appropriate numbers of staff had been employed to meet Annex A of the National Care Standards.

Staff provided information in relation to supporting children and families with additional needs and the value of liaising with specialist agencies as appropriate and in consultation with parents/carers.

Areas for Development

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0
Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service Strengths

Parents/carers within the service were provided with various opportunities to assess and make comment about the quality of management and leadership.

Parents and carers had been made aware of the new inspection and the self assessment process and were all given an opportunity to participate with the self evaluation of all aspects the service including staffing.

Parents/carers within the nursery were invited to join the parent council which was recently established January 2008. This gives all parents/carers an additional opportunity to share their views and become more actively involved with the service. Parents/carers on this forum are invited to participate in the recruitment of any management positions within the service.

Areas for Development

It was evident that the provider and staff involves the children and encourages them to make choices and decisions regarding their day to day life in the service. As in recommendation 1, the service provider now needs to formalise the process to record and audit the children's views and opinions and involve them with the quality assurance system and self evaluation process of the overall service provision.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 4: We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide.

Service Strengths

The service had in place a development plan which had been developed through various self evaluation processes throughout the whole service provision. Within the development plan was identified areas which referred solely to the nursery area. The depute head teacher formally observes practice within the service annually, although informal monitoring programmes are continuous to ensure the quality assurance throughout the service. Written observation of practice was available at the inspection as evidence. Staff stated that regular
planning meetings were held and any views or suggestions made by staff, children or parents were taken forward and acted on where appropriate. Examination of weekly plans evidenced this to have taken place as well as information recorded on the whiteboard within the service.

The service had developed a "Quality Assurance" policy statement which states: "The school's aims are a foundation for self-evaluation and allow achievements to be made, measured and assist staff, pupils and parents to identify strengths, development needs and planning priorities".

The manager stated that staff and management had completed a formal audit of the service using the Child at the Centre 2 quality assurance tool. This had informed their input, into the whole school's development plan for the year ahead.

The service works with and takes on board feedback, requirements and recommendations from various external agencies.

Staff stated that the service provider and manager was aware of their responsibility for notifying the Care Commission, Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and other professional bodies of relevant information relating to any staffing issues.

Areas for Development

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0
Regulations / Principles

National Care Standards
Enforcement
There has been no enforcement action against this service since the last inspection.

Other Information
No other issues were discussed at this inspection.

Requirements
There were no requirements noted at this inspection.

Recommendations
1. The service provider should now formalise the process and record and audit the children's views and opinions regarding the service. National Care Standards, Early Education and Childcare Standard 13.1

2. The service provider should begin to look at ways of involving parents/ carers in the recruitment and selection of staff. National Care Standards, Early Education and Childcare Standard 12.1

Elaine Ward
Care Commission Officer