Inspection report

Aberlour Primary Nursery School
Day Care of Children

Mary Avenue
Aberlour    AB38 9PN

Inspected by: Margaret Irons
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)

Inspection completed on: 9 June 2008
Service Number: CS2003016011
Service name: Aberlour Primary Nursery School

Service address:
Mary Avenue
Aberlour AB38 9PN

Provider Number: SP2003001892
Provider Name: The Moray Council

Inspected By:
Margaret Irons
Care Commission Officer

Inspection Type: Announced (short notice)

Inspection Completed: 9 June 2008
Period since last inspection: 12 months

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Introduction
Aberlour Primary Nursery School is a Moray Council provision and was registered with the Care Commission from April 2002 to care for a maximum of 15 children at any one time from 3 years to not yet attending primary school. The service is located within the primary school and has access to several areas with the main building along with two outdoor play areas.

Based on the findings of this inspection the service has been awarded the following grades:
Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good
Quality of Environment - 4 - Good
Quality of Staffing - 4 - Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - 4 - 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.

The Self-Assessment Form
The service submitted a self-assessment form as requested by the Care Commission

Views of service users
The Care Commission Officer met with children during the inspection visit. They spoke with some and observed others

Regulation Support Assessment
The inspection plan for this service was decided after a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) was carried out to determine the intensity of 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.

LOW
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.

During the inspection process
Staff at inspection
The Care Commission Officer met with the headteacher and spoke with the two staff members present during the inspection.

Evidence
The Care Commission Officer considered evidence from a range of sources, including:

The service’s self assessment
Review of the service's policies and procedures relevant to the Quality Statements
Child protection policy
Health and safety policy
Infection control policy
Newsletters issued to parents and information displayed for them.
Weekly plans
Care standards questionnaires returned to the Care Commission by parents and carers
Evidence of training, including records and certificates
Discussions with the headteacher, staff, some children and some parents and carers
Observation of staff practice
Examination of the premises.

All of the above evidence was taken into account during the inspection process and was reported on.

Inspection Focus Areas and links to Quality Themes and Statements for 2008/09
Details of the inspection focus and associated Quality Themes to be used in inspecting each type of care service in 2008/09 and supporting inspection guidance, can be found at: http://www.carecommission.com/

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 outstanding requirements from the last inspection.

Comments on Self Assessment
The service had completed the self assessment as requested by the Care Commission over all the quality statements in each of the 4 quality themes. They had identified many strengths of the service as well as some areas they intended to improve.

View of Service Users
Children were generally observed to be enjoying their time at the nursery during the inspection visit. Most spoke positively about the nursery and were engrossed in their chosen
activities. All of the children appeared to be comfortable about accessing resources and using the facilities and most of them enjoyed their time outdoor in the playground with the school children.

**View of Carers**
Five parent questionnaires were returned, of whom they all stated that they were 'very happy' with the service provided. Further comments included 'staff are very friendly and approachable', 'there is more outdoor play now in all weathers' and 'the nursery has been a very positive experience for my children'.
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

Parents are issued with a wealth of useful information prior to using the service and are encouraged to visit the nursery with their child before the enrolment date. This provided general information to parents about the service and the availability of the written policies. These policies include the aims and objectives of the service, health and safety, curriculum issues along with information on parents working in partnership, involvement and confidentiality.

Staff were observed throughout the inspection visit interacting very positively with the children and responding sensitively to their needs. They had built up good relationships with the children and demonstrated an awareness of their individual needs. A welcoming notice board contained displays of policies and procedures, previous inspection reports, weekly plans, snack menu, local childcare information and photographs of various activities children had been involved in.

Through discussion and the self-assessment the headteacher and staff further highlighted that daily communication with parents and carers played an important part in encouraging them to participate and assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service on an informal basis. Staff had also recently introduced home diaries. Examination of these books indicated that communication was a 2 way process with useful information shared between both caring environments promoting staff and parents working together for the benefit of individual children.

The staff had made very good efforts to involve parents and children in the evaluation and development of the service.

Children's views were obtained informally at circle time and through daily discussions with staff members. Parents had the opportunity to attend group meetings over the year and are offered the facility of making comment on the service at individual interview. In addition to this children have supported representation on the school 'pupil council' and a parent is included as one of the representatives on the school 'parent council'.

Questionnaires have been issued to parents and comments from these considered. Parents could also stay in tune with the nursery activity through the recent launch of the 'E-Board' school website for children and parents to use at home.

Following discussion with the headteacher, staff, comments from parents and from examination of relevant documents, this service was found to have a good performance in relation to this statement.

Areas for Development

The headteacher and staff have made good attempts to include parents and children in assessing the quality of care and support provided by the service. They should continue to
build on this good practice and further develop and progress a wide range of strategies. They also needed to review the questionnaires to relate questions specifically to the statements within the quality themes used by the Care Commission.

**CCO Grading**

4 - Good

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**

0

**Statement 3: We ensure that service user’s health and wellbeing needs are met.**

**Service Strengths**

There are a wide and comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place to support and promote children's health and wellbeing. These include health, hygiene, safety, healthy eating, oral health, fire evacuation procedures, and infection control.

Staff demonstrated a commitment to meeting the individual health and wellbeing needs of each child; this was supported through their attendance in a wide variety of training courses.

Staff were observed to be caring and sensitive towards the children. They knew the children well and responded to their needs and requests while encouraging them to be independent and co-operative with each other. Throughout the session staff were seen to be reminding children of safety issues and nursery rules and children were encouraged to work things out for themselves.

Toys and play materials had been chosen to accommodate the age range and interests of the children attending. Parents' comments included ‘my child loves going to nursery and is very well looked after’ and ‘staff are friendly and approachable’.

Each session enables the children to experience both indoor and outdoor activities. There is also a wide ranging physical development programme and a very good selection of ‘outdoor play bags’ providing a wide range of resources to deliver the pre-school curriculum.

Observation and discussion with staff, children and parents during the inspection evidenced that healthy snacks were provided, taking account of allergies and food intolerances. Staff had made reference to the nutritional guidance for early years and had attended training in relation to food hygiene. Seven out of eight parents who responded to the Care Commission questionnaires stated that they were very happy/happy with the range and choice of food, indicating that there was always/usually a range of healthy snacks available.

**Inspection Focus area : Child Protection**

All staff had attended training in child protection procedures. Through discussion they demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of their training and explained where this
would be implemented in practice.

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, the Framework Standards for Child Protection and The Children's Charter.

Six out of eight parents who responded to the Care Commission questionnaires before the inspection indicated that they were aware of the service child protection policy and procedure. The policy and procedure was found to be on display on the service notice board.

Following discussion with the provider, staff, comments from parents and children and from examination of relevant documents, this service was found to have an excellent performance in relation to this statement.

**Areas for Development**

To continue to maintain this high standard of practice.

**CCO Grading**

6 - Excellent

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**

0
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 4 - Good

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

Service Strengths

Findings for this Quality Statement were similar to those discussed in Quality Statement 1.1 above.

In addition, parents and carers were encouraged to visit the playroom daily as they brought children to the pre-school centre and collected them again. They were also made aware of the service's policies relating to the environment and encouraged to make comments and feedback on them.

Children were consulted with about the environment, especially in relation to the use of toys and equipment. For instance they had requested a variety of different resources to be included in the water tray and their ideas and views were listened to. There was time set aside each week where they voted using a bead system in relation to such things as what to have for snack, different activities to have in the room and what imaginative play areas they would like.

Following discussion with the staff, comments from parents and from examination of relevant documents, this service was found to have a good performance in relation to this statement

Areas for Development

The service had identified through the self assessment the need to put in place a formal process for gathering the views of parents and service users in assessing the quality of the environment.

CCO Grading

4 - Good

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 provided from within a welcoming, safe and secure environment and benefits from having access to several areas within the main school building and two safe outdoor
play areas. Staff were observed to supervise children's arrival and departure from the nursery very well.

Staff reminded the children of safety rules in particular during one activity regarding the safe height to build the large wooden blocks. Staff were also observed reminding the children of good hygiene practice.

There is a wide and comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place to support staff to promote best practice in all health and safety issues. Risk assessments have been carried out, procedures for identifying maintenance issues, maintenance records are all in place and safety checks of all the areas are carried out on a daily basis.

The premises were viewed as being very clean and very good cleaning procedures were carried out. The presentation of the environment is stimulating and there is an appropriate balance of displays of children's work, printed materials, photographs and posters for children's interest.

The furnishings are appropriate to the age range of the children in attendance.

The playroom was well organised and children can move freely around the rooms and also have free choice access to a wide variety of resources. The outdoor areas are checked for safety prior to the children going outside and staff were seen to be supervising the children well whilst they were playing outside.

Following discussion with the headteacher, staff, comments from parents and from examination of relevant documents, this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

**Areas for Development**

The service needed to further develop and review the risk assessments for the service.

The reception area for the nursery which is shared with the playgroup is due to be extended, this should ease the congestion problem.

**CCO Grading**

5 - Very Good

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**

0
Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 4 - Good

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

Service Strengths

Findings for this Quality Statement were similar to those discussed in Quality Statement 1.1 above.

Parental questionnaires issued by the service had given parents the opportunity to express views and a comments box has been introduced. Staffing policies are shared with parents and their comments welcomed. Five Care Commission questionnaires received gave parents the opportunity to express views on the service and they all indicated that staff knew their children, treated them respectfully and fairly and interacted well with them.

There was an appropriate complaints policy displayed in the entrance area. Information was displayed for parents and carers on how to contact the Care Commission. Parents commented that staff were easy to talk to and they would have no hesitation in contacting a member of staff if need be.

News letters had advised parents of any changes in staffing.

Following discussion with the headteacher, staff, comments from parents and from examination of relevant documents, this service was found to have a good performance in relation to this statement.

Areas for Development

The service has identified through the self assessment that their own service users' questionnaires need to be focused on particular areas for development.

CCO Grading

4 - Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 2: We are confident that our staff have been recruited, and inducted, in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff.

Service Strengths

The service follows the Local Authority recruitment policy and procedures
There have been recent changes in the staff for the service and from discussion with the headteacher, all of the relevant checks were carried out prior to a person commencing employment with the service.

There are clear job descriptions and remits that focus on the aims and objectives of the service. Staff demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities as individuals and as a team as a whole.

An induction procedure is followed which reflects on the service's policies and procedures for all aspects of the service.

A programme of staff development was in place to ensure staff develop their own skills and keep abreast of current best practice. The staff reported that they receive notification of training opportunities available to them and that requests for additional training can be made through the headteacher. A formal staff appraisal system was in place for staff.

The service complies with the required adult : child ratios and makes good use of the staff's skills, qualifications and experience. During the inspection staff demonstrated enthusiasm and commitment to their work.

Following discussion with the headteacher, staff, comments from parents and from examination of relevant documents, this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

**Areas for Development**

To continue to maintain this high standard of practice.

**CCO Grading**

5 - Very Good

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**

0
Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 4 - 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

Findings for this Quality Statement were similar to those discussed in Quality Statement 1.1 above.

Following discussion with the headteacher, staff, comments from parents and from examination of relevant documents, this service was found to have a good performance in relation to this statement.

Areas for Development

The headteacher advised that the service would continue to look at ways of involving parents and children in the service provision and would consider any suggestions made with regard to improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

CCO Grading

4 - Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 2: We involve our workforce in determining the direction and future objectives of the service.

Service Strengths

The headteacher has regular contact with the nursery as well as carrying out the formal procedures involved with the service. There are team meetings with the Early Stages Department and regular meetings between the senior nursery nurse and the principal teacher. These meetings are used to effectively review the service's aims and objectives and to keep abreast of national and local guidance.

Areas for Development

The headteacher completed the self assessment for the service and submitted it to the Care Commission with very limited consultation with the nursery staff.

The senior nursery nurse was currently reviewing the services policies and procedures.
The headteacher, along with the nursery staff should build on existing systems and implement a more rigorous and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of the service. See recommendation 1 at the end of report.

**CCO Grading**

4 - Good

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**

1
Regulations / Principles

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

Other Information
There were no further issues resulting from this inspection.

Requirements
None identified at this inspection.

Recommendations
The headteacher, along with the nursery staff should build on existing systems and implement a more rigorous and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of the service.
National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16: National Care Standard 13: Improving the service

Margaret Irons
Care Commission Officer