Inspection report

Inverurie Market Place School Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

Market Place
Inverurie AB51 3XN

Inspected by: Frances Smith
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 14 May 2009
Service Number: CS2003015709
Service name: Inverurie Market Place School Nursery Class

Service address:
Market Place
Inverurie AB51 3XN

Provider Number: SP2003000029
Provider Name: Aberdeenshire Council

Inspected By:
Frances Smith
Care Commission Officer

Inspection Type: Unannounced
Inspection Completed: 14 May 2009
Period since last inspection: 27 months

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Introduction
Inverurie Market Place Primary School Nursery is provided by Aberdeenshire Council and is situated within the centre of Inverurie. The service provides part-time provision for children from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school. The service is currently registered to provide places for a maximum of 20 children. At the time of the inspection the roll was 18.

The service aims:

>‘to provide a well planned, broad and balanced range of relevant, challenging experiences and opportunities which are responsive to the children’s needs and help them learn through play’

>‘to provide as safe and healthy an environment as is possible for all adults and children using the nursery’

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 - 5 - Very Good
Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - 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

This report was written following an unannounced inspection which took place on 01 May 2009 between 9.20am and 12.20pm. Feedback was given to the manager on 14 May 2009.

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 service issued 10 service user questionnaires on behalf of the Care Commission of which 4 were returned to the Care Commission, prior to inspection.

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.

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 Area and associated National Care Standards, recommendations and requirements from previous inspections and complaints or other regulatory activity.

During the inspection the Care Commission Officers spoke with

The manager
The nursery teacher
The nursery nurse
Parents
Children

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

Previous inspection report
Action plans
Annual Return
Self-Assessment
Aims
Newsletters
Child protection procedures
Infection Control procedures
Medication Policy
Displays/ photographs
Planning records
Equal Opportunities policy
Curriculum Policy
Complaint procedure
Accident records

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
Action taken on requirements since last Inspection
There were no requirements made at the previous inspection.

Comments on Self Assessment
The service had completed a detailed Self-Assessment which included relevant information for the quality themes and focus areas associated with the inspection. Areas for improvement had also been identified.

View of Service Users
The children appeared happy and relaxed in their play. They were observed to be confident in their exchanges and discussion with staff and were happy to share their experiences with the Care Commission Officer.

View of Carers
All four parents who responded to the Care Commission questionnaire indicated a high level of confidence in the service.

They strongly agreed that they were overall happy with the service and that they always had a chance to be involved with the service and were kept informed about what was happening in the service.

Five parents spoken with at the time of the inspection also indicated that overall they were happy with the service being provided. Specific comments included:

"really pleased with the service"

"feel welcome and staff listen to parents"

"outside on a regular basis"

"regular gym slots"

"staff really skilled at getting children to listen and respond"

"well integrated with the school"

"included in the school - positive transitions"
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 used a range of methods to engage with carers in assessing and improving the quality of care and support for their child.

Parents/carers had completed registration forms in respect of their children before starting to use the service to ensure that staff had comprehensive information in preparation for the arrival and settling in of new children, assisting them in meeting their individual needs.

Parents or carers were welcomed into the service and were encouraged to engage with staff regarding their child's development. The service demonstrated a commitment to working with parents and had invited them to contribute to their topics and bring any skills to the service.

Children were encouraged to participate in linking aspects of the home and nursery through themes and displays and suitable guidance was provided to parents to further support this activity.

The views of carers were also sought through whole school and satisfaction questionnaires specific to nursery. These covered a range of questions including those relevant to the care and support provided. The results were audited and an analysis had been communicated to parents/carers.

Those respondents to the Care Standards Questionnaires issued by the Care Commission as well as those parents spoken with during the inspection visit confirmed that staff worked with them and their children to meet their children's needs. Specific comments included:
"Wonderful staff, very approachable, they know my child as an individual"
"I was given project booklet to complete to inform staff about my child. It was a fun thing for children to do with their parents"

Throughout the course of the inspection there was very clear evidence to support that the planning of activities and structure of the day was determined by the needs and interests of the children.

Through discussion and the Self-Assessment the provider and staff further highlighted that daily communication with parents and carers played an important part in encouraging them to participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service on an informal basis.

Areas for Development

The staff should build on the already very good practice in relation to this statement and continue to obtain the views of the parents and children and use these to further improve the quality of care and support provided by the service.

CCO Grading

5 - Very 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

The aims and objectives of the service that were displayed and included in the nursery's handbook reflected how the service would aim to meet children's health, emotional, personal and social needs.

Policies and procedures had been established to support the good practice observed in promoting good personal hygiene, infection control and health and safety. Emergency procedures were in place as well as suitable arrangements for administering first aid and medication.

It was clear from observation and discussion that staff had an excellent knowledge of the ages and stages of development of children and understood their individual needs. They interacted in a consistently warm and friendly way offering an appropriate level of support or challenge as determined by the children's needs.

Appropriate systems were in place for accessing help from other professionals and agencies to support children and families. There was evidence that the nursery worked closely with specialists to support them in meeting the children's needs.

Tooth brushing had been implemented in the nursery. Children were observed to be familiar with tooth brushing routines. A dental practitioner had visited the service to provide support and monitor their progress in relation to tooth brushing.

The service aimed to provide healthy snacks. They had a copy of the nutritional guidance for early years. The staff advised that the document had been used as a guide when considering the range of snacks to be offered.

Examination of records and menus indicated that suggestions made by children had been considered when preparing the menu.

Observation, examination of menus and feedback from parents evidenced that healthy snacks were provided daily and children were encouraged to try new healthy foods. Children had benefited from shopping for and choosing food, setting up and serving snack. They had also enjoyed baking activities. Menus were found to be on display for parents.

The service was found to have a system in place to obtain details of children's allergies and food intolerances. Details were shared with staff.

Appropriate systems were also in place to take care of children's medical or support needs. The staff had appropriate training in first aid and food hygiene.
Those parents who returned the Care Commission questionnaires strongly agreed/agreed that the service provided a healthy and well balanced diet which met their child's dietary and cultural needs.

The nursery was found to be participating in a whole school initiative 'active for life'. Children had enjoyed developing and practicing their skipping skills to take part in 'a skip off' during health week. One child was particularly enthusiastic about practicing skipping and was delighted to have 'done 44 skips'.

As part of planning for health week and to meet the curriculum for excellence learning outcomes, plans evidenced that children were about to learn about healthy life styles, to visit the health centre, to participate in sports day and enjoy a visit from a dental practitioner.

Parents had been involved in arranging for the distribution of active bags where by children took them home over a two week period to practice their catching, throwing and rolling skills at home.

The children had also benefited from regular sessions with specialist teachers in music, gym and Kodaly.

There were opportunities for children to participate in physical energetic play indoors and outside. Children could run, climb, balance and there were lots of wheeled toys and opportunities for planting and growing. Outdoor activities were integral to the daily programme and children were observed clearly enjoying play outdoors.

Opportunities existed for children to have a rest or quiet time whenever required.

Inspection Focus Area - Child Protection.

The service had a child protection policy and procedure in place. An additional range of appropriate policies and procedures were found to be in place to support practice. These included the North East of Scotland Child Protection guidelines, the Framework Standards for Child Protection and The Children's Charter.

Discussion with the staff indicated that they had participated in child protection training. They also indicated that should they have any concerns these would be passed on to the manager for appropriate action.

All four parents who responded to the Care Commission questionnaire strongly agreed/agreed that the staff would protect their children from harm, abuse, bullying and neglect. The service child protection procedures had been made available to parents/carers on the service notice board.

Areas for Development

The service should continue to maintain current good practice and encourage and support staff to access a wide range of training opportunities and best practice guidance documents in relation to ensuring the health and wellbeing needs of the children are met.

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent
Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

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 environment within the service.

Service Strengths

Children were offered choices within the nursery environment as determined by their individual needs. This was observed by the officer during nursery welcome time and throughout the session. The children were given time to express their preferences while interacting with staff in a range of situations. The staff were very experienced and skilled in understanding the children's responses which could be gestures, facial expressions or sounds.

A range of opportunities existed for carers to comment on the environment or make suggestions for improvement. These included the use of children's daily pick up and drop off and questionnaires issued by the service. The evidence available indicated that carers felt they were encouraged to become involved in activities and that the service took account of their views.

See also Quality Statement 1.1.

Areas for Development

See Quality Statement 1.1

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 3: The environment allows service users to have as positive a quality of life as possible.

Service Strengths

During the inspection staff were observed to be consistently working together to ensure that the children had the highest quality of experience as possible. Staff were committed to the nursery and worked hard to create a warm, secure and stimulating learning environment for the children.

They offered a variety of safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor resources including regular opportunities for energetic play. Further more the service also made use of local resources to
further enhance the children's quality of experience.

Parents who responded to the service questionnaire recognised that the service had made best use of the space available, stating:

"I picked this nursery because of the room set up, it's full of colour and just right for my child"

"the room is fairly small but is used very well and like the fact it is non-open planned"

"Rather small/compact area within the nursery although this doesn't appear to impact on the children and is used creatively. Resources and learning opportunities are used well"

Children were observed to have free choice of the available activities during their time in nursery which included, time spent outdoors. Examples of children's work were displayed attractively around the nursery and children were encouraged to create and investigate displays.

Further evidence was found within the planning documents of opportunities for the children to benefit from a range of outings and visitors.

Systems were in place to record any maintenance of equipment and repairs were undertaken without delay.

Appropriate facilities were available for food to be enjoyed and staff were observed encouraging good habits in relation to snack times.

Staff and parents stated that the nursery was very much part of the school with the children benefiting from participating in weekly sessions with specialist teachers in gym, rhythm and music and ICT.

Parents were of the opinion this inclusion will make the transition to P1 smooth and enjoyable for their children.

**Areas for Development**

Within the Self-Assessment the service had identified that they proposed to introduce a wider community involvement, such as grandparent days and bring your dad to nursery. They also planned to make use of the school's updated electronic library system. They proposed to implement these improvements by August 2009.

**CCO Grading**

5 - Very Good

**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

The nursery handbook and notice board informed carers of staffing levels and any changes were communicated to them verbally or by newsletter.

A range of opportunities existed for parents/carers to comment on the quality of staffing. These included questions about staff interaction with the children in satisfaction questionnaires issued by the service and discussions taking place between staff and parents/carers at children's transition meetings.

Care Commission questionnaires also gave parents the opportunity to express views on the quality of staff support and interaction.

Parents strongly agreed or agreed that they were confident that staff had appropriate skills and experience and that their children appeared happy and confident with the staff.

See also Quality Statement 1.1.

Areas for Development

See Quality Statement 1.1

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

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

Service Strengths

Staff were observed to be performing at a consistently high level to meet the needs of the children and their families. They were warm and caring in their interactions and were observed to take pleasure in the children's achievements.

Staff were observed to work well together as a team and stated that they received strong support from the head teacher.
The service had appropriate staffing policies and procedures in place, including recruitment procedures, training and development and whistle blowing. Staff had attended a number of in-house training events including child protection, curriculum for excellence and active learning.

A continual professional development plan was in place for all staff. This identified the training needs of individual staff. Both staff had participated in annual appraisals. Through discussion with staff they demonstrated their awareness of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Codes of Practice.

Discussion with staff and examination of planning and children's work highlighted that staff were actively using best practice guidance including National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare, Nutritional Guidance for Early Years, Child at the Centre 2 and the Curriculum for Excellence.

**Areas for Development**

Within Self-Assessment the service stated their intention to review and re-write their induction procedures and policy. They propose to have undertaken this improvement by January 2010.

**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: 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

A selection of evidence was available highlighting where service users, parents and carers had been consulted about the quality of management and leadership within the service. This was done via open door policy and daily discussions.

Additional information regarding service user and carer participation can be found within Statement 1.1.

Areas for Development

See Quality Statement 1.1

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 an appropriate range of policies and procedures which reflected current legislation and the aims of the service.

Throughout the course of the inspection staff demonstrated a very good awareness of the need to take account of the children's preferences when developing the provision. This informal auditing underpinned all actions within the service.

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. Weekly evaluations of nursery activity had been carried out and findings were used to inform next steps for group and individual learning. Examination of weekly plans evidenced this to have taken place.

Regular staff and management meetings took place. All were conversant with the National Care Standards and accompanying principles. How Good is our School had been used for
self-evaluation and to inform the improvement plan along with directives from the local authority. The head teacher advised that the results of an audit about to be undertaken using the Child at the Centre 2 and parents' responses to the nursery and whole school questionnaire is to inform the next improvement plan.

Parents confirmed within the Care Commission questionnaire and at interview that they could approach staff if they had a concern and were aware of the service Complaints Policy.

Inspection focus Area - Notifications

The head teacher was aware of the service responsibility in reporting to the SSSC any social care staff dismissed on the grounds of misconduct. The head teacher also understood his responsibility in providing the SSSC with any information it may require in the exercise of its regulatory functions. Further discussion took place regarding the need to inform the Care Commission of matters of misconduct.

Areas for Development

Within the Self-Assessment the service had identified the need to continue to formalise the procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the service. It was acknowledged that peer monitoring was about to be implemented.

The service should continue to build on the current very good practice in relation to this statement and develop the use of the existing informal processes to further enhance their Self-Assessment in the future.

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
Discussion with management, staff and examination of documentation evidenced that action had been taken to address the recommendation made at the previous inspection.

Requirements
No requirements were made during this inspection.

Recommendations
No recommendations were made during this inspection.

Frances Smith
Care Commission Officer