

**Integrated Inspection by the  
Care Commission and  
HM Inspectorate of Education of  
Lady Alice Nursery Class  
Inverclyde Council**

**14 March 2007**

**Lady Alice Nursery Class  
Inverkip Road  
Greenock  
PA16 9EH**

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<br>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 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 should write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330 (fax 0800 377 7331) or e-mail [ask@spsso.org.uk](mailto:ask@spsso.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.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 Lady Alice Nursery Class Inverclyde Council**

## **Introduction**

Lady Alice Nursery Class was inspected in November 2006 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 34.

## **The environment**

### **Standard 2**

The nursery was located within the primary school. It consisted of a spacious cloakroom area and a playroom. Staff had thoughtfully and attractively laid out the playroom making good use of the available space. They had created a welcoming environment for children with attractive displays which children could explore and investigate. Resources were well maintained, organised and easily accessed by children. There was no room within the playroom for indoor energetic play but children had regular access to the school gym and small enclosed outdoor area.

Staff ensured that play equipment was clean and well maintained and encouraged children to adopt good hygiene practices. They had appropriate measures to control the spread of infection. They carried out and recorded appropriate risk assessments.

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

### **Standard 4 & 5**

Staff knew children well and were responsive to their individual needs. They had created a purposeful environment where children readily engaged in appropriately challenging activities. They listened to children and used dialogue very effectively to support and extend learning. They gave children time to formulate and express their thoughts and ideas. Sensitive interventions supported children to develop their interests. They provided a good balance between adult-led activities and free play.

Staff's planning, observation and recording procedures were good. They observed children at play, noted their progress and met regularly to evaluate provision. The information gained did not clearly show next steps in individual children's learning. Staff had compiled useful folders of children's work, photos of children at play and assessment information. Parents were able to

request access to their child's folder to enable them to contribute to their child's progress record.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were happy, settled and comfortable with nursery routines and simple rules. Staff praised children and encouraged them to make choices and persevere in tasks. Children were caring and considerate of one another and were very well behaved. They were developing independence through a variety of tasks including pouring out drinks at snack and tidying away toys. They were developing skills in personal hygiene when washing hands and cleaning their teeth. Most children concentrated well on their chosen activities and could share and take turns. They were forming firm friendships and becoming aware of the needs of others.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to listen and talk. Children were confident when talking to one another and to adults. They expressed their ideas very well during play activities. Most children listened attentively to a story being read by a staff member and could predict, describe and answer questions. Staff provided a very good range of writing tools and materials which children enjoyed using at activities throughout the nursery. A few children were beginning to write their own name. Staff used a variety of signs and labels effectively within the playroom to help children make the link between the spoken and written word.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Children used the computer confidently to learn about number, size, colour and solve simple problems. Staff used outings, visitors and community events well to help children learn about the local and wider environment. Children were learning about the natural world through planting bulbs and caring for stick insects. Some children were highly motivated by investigating the use of torches to learn about light and dark. Staff supported children well at activities and intervened effectively to develop children's skills in problem solving. Children were given good opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures through the celebration of a variety of festivals.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Staff provided a wide range of materials for children to express themselves freely and creatively. They enjoyed collage, painting, model making, and gluing and sticking. Children enjoyed extended periods of role-play when playing in the home corner and when pretending to travel into space when making 'space rockets' from boxes. Staff interacted well to support and extend their play. They had provided very good opportunities for children to make their own music and explore and investigate a variety of percussion instruments. Children were gaining a good understanding of rhythm, pitch, beat and tone. They participated happily and enthusiastically in group singing and knew a range of songs and rhymes.

- The programme for physical development and movement was good. Children were developing good hand and finger control using scissors, glue, pencils, peg boards and construction toys. Staff regularly used the enclosed outside area to provide children with a range of physical activities, including using wheeled toys and balancing. Children had daily access to the school gym where they were developing coordination skills and an awareness of space. They benefited from weekly visits from an 'Active Heart' coach when they ran, jumped, skipped and took part in an obstacle course with enthusiasm. They were gaining in their understanding of health and fitness. Children did not have sufficient access to independent physical activity in the playroom.

## **Support for children and families**

### **Standard 6**

The nursery provided good support for children and families. Staff knew children and families well and provided effective support for them. They responded sensitively to children's individual circumstances. Parents were kept well informed through regular newsletters, notice boards, planning information and handbook. Staff had developed good home-nursery links by operating a book lending scheme and 'Travelling Ted', a home link diary. Parents were encouraged to become involved in charity events. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and those spoken to on the day of the inspection, were satisfied with most aspects of the service. A few wanted more opportunities to be involved with the nursery.

The nursery had well-planned arrangements in place for children moving into primary school. An effective 'buddy' system and story reading sessions, using older pupils, provided children with familiar faces to help ease their transition to school. Children attended school events and used the school garden area. Information on children's progress was shared with parents and P1 teachers to ensure continuity and progression in children's learning.

The management team had a clear understanding of legislation for supporting children who required additional help in their learning. They had developed strong working relationships with a wide range of professionals, support agencies and the local authority support team. They worked with parents and were in the process of putting together individualised educational programmes for children who needed extra help with their learning and development.

## **Management**

### **Standard 14**

The headteacher was a very effective leader. She was approachable and committed to the full integration of the nursery into the life of the school. She had supported staff well during a recent period of significant change and worked well with the nursery teacher, who was responsible for the day-to-day running of the nursery. Together, they displayed a high level of professional competence in early years work and had a clear vision for the future development of the nursery.

The nursery had a wide range of policies and procedures which provided useful information to parents and helpful guidance to staff. Relationships between staff were very good and they worked well as a team. A staff development and review system was well established, along with support meetings for non-teaching staff, which identified individual training needs. All staff were aware of child protection procedures and followed these appropriately. They knew about the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the implications for their practice.

The headteacher had recently introduced the local authority's new procedures to systematically monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery. These included visits to observe staff interaction with children and the collecting of evidence to evaluate the provision. However, due to staff changes, the improvement plan had been compiled by the headteacher and the views of parents and children did not influence the choice of priorities for improvement.

## **Key strengths**

- The confident children who were motivated and engaged in their learning.
- The hardworking staff team who interacted effectively with children to support and extend their learning.
- The four very good programmes for emotional, personal and social development, communication and language, knowledge and understanding of the world and expressive and aesthetic development.
- The very good support for, and the integration of, children in the nursery with additional support needs.
- The effective management and leadership provided by the headteacher.

## **Other Issues**

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

At the last Care Commission singleton inspection there were no recommendations or requirements.

## **Recommendations for improvement**

- The headteacher should further improve self-evaluation procedures to include all parents and children appropriately.
- The headteacher and staff should continue to maintain the very good quality of nursery provision.

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.

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HM Inspectorate of Education