

**Integrated Inspection by the  
Care Commission and  
HM Inspectorate of Education of  
Aileymill Nursery School  
Inverclyde**

**18 April 2007**

**Aileymill Nursery School  
Auchmead Road  
Greenock  
PA16 0JE**

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.

National Care Standard	Child at the Centre Quality Indicator
Standard 2 – A Safe Environment	Resources
Standard 4 – Engaging with Children	Development and learning through play
Standard 5 – Quality of Experience	Curriculum 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**

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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).

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# **Integrated Inspection by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education of Aileymill Nursery School Inverclyde**

## **Introduction**

Aileymill Nursery School was inspected in January 2007 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 75 children attending at any one session. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 115.

## **The environment**

### **Standard 2**

The accommodation comprised of two large playrooms, a room used for physical play and a smaller room used to promote aspects of early maths and discovery. Children were able to move freely between playrooms. The playrooms were bright and had a very spacious feel. Staff had made very good use of all available space to create a very interesting and stimulating learning environment. Children had good access to a wide range of appropriate resources and activities to support their development and learning through play. They had direct access from one of the playrooms to the fully-enclosed outdoor play area.

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

### **Standard 4 & 5**

Staff engaged very skilfully with children to support them in their play and ensure they were suitably challenged. They encouraged children to think and question when engaging in an activity. They knew children very well as individuals and were very responsive to individual needs. The learning environment provided children with a great deal of choice and children engaged enthusiastically in planned learning experiences. Children were highly motivated and displayed high levels of concentration during play. The balance between adult-led activities and activities children could choose for themselves was very good.

Approaches to assessment and planning were very good. Individual children's profiles were well maintained. Staff systematically gathered a wide range of useful observation and assessment information. Children's needs were discussed on a regular basis and next steps in learning were clearly identified. Staff met weekly to discuss children's interests and plan an appropriate range of learning experiences. Planning was clearly focused on what children were expected to learn.

Features of the programmes for children included the following.

- The programme for emotional, personal and social development was very good. Children were happy in nursery. Some children had recently started nursery and were very well supported by staff in becoming familiar with established rules and routines. Children displayed a great deal of perseverance when completing puzzles and jigsaws. They were very independent in accessing snack and helping themselves to fruit and milk. Children played very well together and were very caring towards each other. They approached activities with confidence. They had been developing a good understanding of other cultures when learning about the Chinese New Year.
- The programme for communication and language was very good. Children had regular access to the well-resourced and comfortable book corner and were learning about the language and layout of books. They used puppets well and enjoyed listening to and being involved in retelling stories. Reference books were well used by children to find out interesting information. Children were enthusiastic in their use of writing tools and used notepads and clipboards in all areas of the nursery. Staff ensured children had many opportunities to recognise their name in print and develop an understanding of letter sounds in their name. Staff provided very good opportunities for children to develop skills in listening and talking in small groups.
- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world was very good. Children confidently used a large touch-screen computer to look at images they had recorded. They used programmable toys to learn about direction and pathways. Mechanical and electronic scales were used well to learn about weight and make comparisons. Children explored the properties of ice in the water tray and were learning about the changing properties of materials. They were learning about the properties of bamboo and other plants. They had been involved in planting activities and were learning about the process of growth. Children were developing an understanding of the importance of recycling.
- The programme for expressive and aesthetic development was very good. Children used clay to sculpt and create animals. They used a wide selection of junk and collage materials to create models and express themselves freely. Staff encouraged children to participate in singing and dancing activities daily. Children had fun dancing expressively to Chinese music. They used a good range of high-quality musical instruments freely to explore sound and beat. Children dressed up and took on adult roles in the imaginative play restaurant. They used construction toys and wild animals to develop small world imaginative play.
- The programme for physical development and movement was very good. Children were developing good hand control when using scissors, writing tools, puzzles and computers. They enjoyed regular access to both the outdoor play area and the designated physical room. Children took part in a

short exercise routine and had fun engaging in energetic activity in the outdoor play area. They used a large climbing frame to help develop coordination skills. Children visited a sports centre located next to the nursery on a weekly basis and a visiting specialist promoted gymnastics and dance.

## **Support for children and families**

### **Standard 6**

Staff provided very good support for children and families. Staff had developed sound relationships with parents and carers. Parents stated in the pre-inspection returns that they found staff to be both supportive and approachable. Parents were kept well informed about life in the nursery through regular newsletters, informative notice boards and daily informal contact. Effective procedures were in place to support children as they moved on to primary school. The nursery had developed close links with a number of primary schools and a well-developed transition programme was in place. Documents detailing children's progress were shared with parents and receiving primary schools. Regular parent workshops helped staff explain the work of the nursery and aspects of the curriculum.

The nursery provided very good support for children requiring additional help with their learning. There were well-established links in place with a number of external support agencies such as speech and language therapy and other specialists. Staff were very familiar with the use of individualised educational programmes and worked closely with parents and visiting specialists in forming these.

## **Management**

### **Standard 14**

The headteacher provided very good leadership. She demonstrated a high degree of professional knowledge and had established very good relationships and clear lines of communication with parents, children and staff. She was committed to the continuous development of the nursery and provided strong leadership for learning.

The highly effective and dedicated staff team worked very well together to provide high-quality experiences for children. A systematic approach to staff development which helped identify training requirements for individual staff was established. Staff had access to a wide range of training opportunities to help support their role within the team. Regular staff meetings provided useful opportunities for staff to raise any issues or concerns. Staff were familiar with the role of the Scottish Social Services Council and its Codes of Practice. They were aware of their responsibilities in protecting children and all were suitably trained in child protection.

All staff were involved in evaluating the work of the nursery and in identifying key areas for improvement. An appropriate development plan was in place and key targets such as improving children's access to information and communications technology were being addressed. The headteacher closely monitored children's progress in all areas of their development and learning. A systematic and rigorous approach to monitoring all aspects of the provision was embedded in practice.

## Key strengths

- The bright, stimulating, well-planned and well-organised learning environment.
- The highly-effective staff team who worked very well together to both support and challenge children in their learning.
- Very good procedures for planning, and the very effective use of assessment information in identifying next steps in children's learning.
- Very good curriculum programmes in all key aspects.
- Very positive relationships between staff and parents and the very good support for children requiring additional help with their learning.
- Strong and effective leadership for learning demonstrated by the headteacher.

## Other Issues

Response to recommendations or to requirements made at previous inspection

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

## Recommendations for improvement

- Maintain the high quality of provision, and continue to develop areas as identified within the school improvement plan.

Care Commission Officers and HM Inspectors have asked the pre-school centre and education authority to prepare an action plan indicating how they will maintain the high quality of provision. 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 that the high quality of provision is maintained.

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