

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
17 FEBRUARY 2010**

**SUBJECT: INTEGRATED INSPECTIONS OF PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES –
PUBLISHED REPORTS FROM DECEMBER 2009 TO JANUARY
2010**

BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Children and Young People's Services Committee to scrutinise and note the integrated inspection of pre-school centres by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and the Care Commission (CC) which was published in December 2009 and January 2010:

- Torridon Pre-school Nursery, Lossiemouth – **Appendix 1**
- Moray Leisure Centre Childcare Centre, Elgin – **Appendix 1**
- Noah's Ark Day Care and Developmental Playgroup, Forres – **Appendix 1**
- Cullen Play Centre, Cullen, Follow-through – **Appendix 2**

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D (1) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Children and Young People's Services Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Between April 2003 and March 2007 pre-school centres underwent an annual inspection. Two out of every three of these were Singleton Inspections by the CC and one was an Integrated Inspection by HMIE jointly with the CC. Integrated Inspections have been reported to Committee since 25 May 2005.

3.2 Since April 2007 HMIE and the CC have been carrying out a revised, more proportionate model of integrated inspection.

The cycle for integrated inspections follows the same cycle as for primary schools, currently a 7-year generational one. The frequency of follow-through visits is decided either on the basis of the quality of provision evaluated during integrated inspections or to provide intelligence for HMIE about good practice. It also takes account of CC information on complaints, recommendations and requirements.

3.3 From August 2008, Inspectors focus on the quality of children's experiences and outcomes, and the success of the pre-school provision in improving the

quality of education. In doing so, Inspectors report on specific aspects of the provision using the following quality indicators from *The Child at the Centre 2*:

- 1.1 Improvements in performance
- 2.1 Children's experiences
- 5.1 The curriculum
- 5.3 Meeting learning needs
- 5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation

They also take account of *National Care Standards, Early Years and Childcare up to the age of 16* which are linked in turn to the CC's Quality Statements.

3.4 Inspectors report on these quality indicators using the six point scale::

<i>Excellent</i>	<i>outstanding, sector leading</i>	6
<i>Very good</i>	<i>major strengths</i>	5
<i>Good</i>	<i>important strengths, some areas for improvement</i>	4
<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>strengths just outweigh weaknesses</i>	3
<i>Weak</i>	<i>important weaknesses</i>	2
<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>major weaknesses</i>	1

3.5 Following publication, inspection reports are available in the Members' Library, through pre-school centres, Council Headquarters, HMIE, the Care Commission and online at www.hmie.gov.uk and www.carecommission.com.

3.6 The pre-school centres and the authority will address, together, the improvement objectives identified within the **Integrated Inspections and Follow-through Inspections** as follows:

- **Torridon Pre-school Nursery, Lossiemouth**
This is a very good report. The authority will continue to support the centre but no specific action is required. (see Appendix 1)
- **Moray Leisure Centre, Childcare Centre, Elgin**
This report sets out a clear agenda for improvement. The centre, under the recently appointed manager is well-placed to address the areas for improvement. The authority will provide regular support to assist the manager and staff in making the necessary improvements. (see Appendix 1)
- **Noah's Ark Day Care and Developmental Playgroup, Forres**
This centre provides a very high quality experience for the children who attend. The authority will continue to support the centre but no specific action is required. (see Appendix 1)
- **Cullen Play Centre, Cullen**
As the centre had made improvements since the original inspection in January 2008 and the main recommendations for improvement were being addressed, HMIE will make no further visits in connection with

the original inspection. The authority will continue to provide regular support to assist the committee, manager and staff in the further improvement, particularly of self-evaluation practices, (see Appendix 2).

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan

- (i) The report is relevant in relation to Local Priority 5 – Attainment and Achievement (Children and Young People) within the Single Outcome Agreement, Local Priority 6 – Young People (Early Years), and
- (ii) Action Area 11 – Curriculum for Excellence in the Service Improvement Plan, and Action Area 6 – Early Years Framework.

(b) Policy and Legal

The report should be considered against the guidance in Section 34 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000, in relation to pre-school education.

The authority has a duty to provide a quality, pre-school education place for every 3 and 4 year old whose parents wish it.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

None

(d) Consultations

Senior Officers in Educational Services, Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant, and Acting Principal Solicitor (Litigation and Licensing), have been consulted and are in agreement with the relevant sections of the report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report.

ITEM:

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Author of Report:

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Background Papers:

Ref:

DMD/JR/Reports/Children and Young People's Services
Committee/17 February 2010/Integrated Inspections of
Pre-School Centres – Published Reports from December
2009 to January 2010

APPENDIX 1

INTEGRATED INSPECTIONS

1. **Torridon Pre-school Nursery, Lossiemouth** – published on 16 December 2009

Particular strengths of the centre:

- Confident, well-motivated and independent children.
- High-quality learning experiences.
- Strong links with parents and the local community.
- Hard working, enthusiastic and approachable staff.
- Leadership of the manager and head of centre in continually improving the work of the nursery.

Examples of good practice

- Expressive Arts.
- Partnership with parents.

Areas for improvement:

- Further improve the nursery's outdoor area to provide more opportunities for children to climb, investigate and explore the natural world.

Requirements

- None

Issues from previous inspections

N/A

Evaluations:

Improvements in performance	Very good
Children's experiences	Very good
Meeting learning needs	Very good
The curriculum	Very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	Very good

Authority Commentary

This is a very good report and reflects the high quality of provision at Torridon Pre-school Nursery.

2. **Moray Leisure Centre Childcare Centre, Elgin** – published on 3 February 2010

Particular strengths of the centre:

- Happy children, who are growing in confidence and independence.
- The range of physical skills children develop through the activity programme.
- Positive relationships between staff, children and families.

Areas for improvement:

- Develop more purposeful staff interaction to support children's social development and extend learning.
- Improve arrangements for observing and planning children's learning to ensure children make appropriate progress.
- Continue to develop the quality of active play experiences to motivate children's interests.
- Improve care routines to better meet the needs of children under 5 who attend all day care.
- Ensure that toilet facilities and wash hand basins are used more appropriately to meet the needs of all children and ensure their privacy and dignity.

Requirements

- The manager must implement effective hygiene and hand washing procedures in preparing and serving food for the children. (Timescale: Immediately upon receipt of this report.)

Issues from previous inspections

N/A

Evaluations:

Improvements in performance	Satisfactory
Children's experiences	Good
Meeting learning needs	Satisfactory
The curriculum	Satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	Satisfactory

Authority Commentary

Moray Leisure Centre Childcare Centre have a clear agenda for improvement. The manager has a clear commitment to the further development of the centre and with support from the authority, will be able to address the areas for improvement.

3. **Noah's Ark Day Care and Developmental Playgroup, Forres** – published on 3 February 2010

Particular strengths of the centre:

- Children who are highly motivated, enthusiastic and successful in their learning.
- High-quality interactions between staff and children.
- The quality of care and support for all children, including those with complex additional support needs.
- Very positive relationships between staff, children, parents and the Board.
- Highly motivated senior managers and staff who are committed to the continuous improvement of the nursery.

Areas for improvement:

- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Requirements

- None

Issues from previous inspections

N/A

Evaluations:

Improvements in performance	Very good
Children's experiences	Very good
Meeting learning needs	Very good
The curriculum	Very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	Very good

Authority Commentary

This is very good report acknowledges the commitment of the staff team in engaging with the improvement agenda. It reflects the high quality of provision at Noah's Ark Day Care and Developmental Playgroup.

1. Cullen Play Centre, Cullen – published 13 January 2010

1. The centre

Cullen Play Centre serves the village of Cullen and the surrounding area. Two new play assistants started in August 2008. Children now attend the playgroup according to age, with the morning session accommodating children in the ante pre-school year and younger children attending the afternoon session. The current roll is 41.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Children who are motivated and keen to learn.
- Involvement of the Parents' Committee in supporting ongoing improvements.
- Positive and caring relationships between staff, children and families.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Children are highly motivated and are keen to learn. They enjoy being at playgroup and are confident moving between activities. Children have a good awareness of each other and some have formed particular friendships. They take turns and share resources well. They enjoy taking on responsibilities like being the snack helper and persevere and support each other in activities like completing jigsaws.

The older children are now making good progress in their learning and development. Staff are not able to monitor progress made by the younger children as they have not yet developed effective ways to track their progress. In early mathematics, almost all children show a good awareness of colour. They count confidently during play activities and are developing an understanding of measurement through pouring and filling containers at the water tray. A few children show good problem-solving skills and persevere in order to gain a solution. Staff recognise that children could have more opportunities to develop these skills. Children talk confidently with adults and their friends about their personal experiences and enjoy talking about dressing up at Halloween. They listen well in group situations and use the listening centre to join in with songs and rhymes. Children have a good understanding of what their written name looks like. They are able to identify their own name and their friends' names during registration and snack routines. Children are also independent in labelling their own art work, and write in their own way when playing in the 'doctor's surgery'.

Staff continue to improve the curriculum. They are beginning to use *Curriculum for Excellence* to help them plan children's learning. They have recently changed the way they plan. This is helping them think more clearly about what children are going to learn and reflect on how successful the learning has been. Staff now need to make more use of the curriculum guidance *Birth to Three* to help improve the curriculum for the younger children. Children have more opportunities to be involved in planning what they are going to learn. For example, together with staff, they plan what their role-play area is going to be. There are more opportunities for children to develop skills in literacy and numeracy in the playroom. Staff also support the development of children's understanding by discussing things with them. There are good opportunities for children to make links in different areas of their learning. For example, children develop literacy skills through using the computer. Staff make good use of the local community to support children's learning.

Staff know children well as individuals and are caring and sensitive to their needs. The older children and staff work together to create individual folders containing photographs and examples of work. Together with ongoing assessment information, this is helping to record progress and identify some next steps in learning for each child. The manager needs to monitor these to ensure that they are personalised and that over time each child is making maximum progress. Staff now need to consider how individual progress can be tracked more effectively for the younger children.

4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?

Staff work well with others to support children's learning. They have very positive relationships with parents. Children's learning is shared with parents through individual profiles and, more recently, through weekly information sheets. Staff are also beginning to link learning in the playgroup to learning at home. Parents have opportunities to share in their child's playgroup experience through the duty rota or by serving on the management committee. The role of the committee has improved significantly since the last inspection and this is having a positive impact on children's learning. The playgroup has good links with the Parent and Toddler group and the local school. This helps them support children when they start playgroup and when it is time for them to move on to the nursery class. Staff recognise that these links could be developed further to support continuity in learning. The playgroup has very positive relationships with the education authority and Care and Learning Alliance (CALA). This has helped them make the changes that are improving children's experiences at playgroup.

5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their school community?

Staff are more aware of the importance of self-evaluation and are developing and implementing a system which is beginning to have a positive impact on children's learning. Committee members have had training on the use of self-evaluation tools and this is supporting them in carrying out their management role. Self-evaluation is being used more effectively to identify areas for improvement. CALA continue to support staff with the creation and implementation of the Improvement Plan. Parents and children have been consulted about the work of the playgroup through the use of questionnaires. A helpful calendar has been put in place to support the ongoing monitoring of different aspects of the playgroup. These monitoring activities are carried out by management, staff and the committee.

6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?

Staff have created a caring and supportive learning environment for children. Children are treated equally and with respect, and are encouraged to treat each other in the same way. They are well behaved and are developing good manners. Children are developing an awareness of a healthy lifestyle and understand the importance of tooth brushing and hand washing. Staff use praise and encouragement appropriately and children's successes are celebrated. The manager now has responsibility for child protection in the playgroup and all staff are clear about their responsibilities in keeping children safe.

7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?

Management and staff show a high level of enthusiasm and commitment to the ongoing improvement of the playgroup. Together, they are developing a vision of what they would like the playgroup to be like. They have made some progress

towards this already and recognise that they have more to do. It will help staff achieve this vision if they continue to develop self-evaluation procedures, and reflect regularly on their day-to-day practice. Staff have made good progress since the initial inspection, and these improvements now need to be applied more in the daily work of staff. With continued support and advice from the local authority and CALA, the playgroup is well placed to improve the quality of provision further.

8. What happens next?

There is evidence that the centre has made improvements since the original inspection in January 2008. The main recommendations for improvement are being addressed and this is having a positive impact on children's learning experiences. As a result HMIE will make no further visits in connection with the inspection of January 2008.