

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE ON  
13 FEBRUARY 2008**

**SUBJECT: INTEGRATED INSPECTIONS OF PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES -  
PUBLISHED REPORTS FROM AUGUST 2007 – JANUARY 2008**

**BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Education and Social Services Committee to scrutinise and note the integrated inspections of pre-school centres by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and the Care Commission which were published between August 2007 and January 2008.
- 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 Education and Social Services Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 From April 2003, pre-school centres underwent an annual inspection. Two out of every three of these were to be a Singleton Inspection by the Care Commission and one was to be an Integrated Inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) jointly with the Care Commission. Integrated Inspections have been reported at Educational Services Committee since 25 May 2005.
- 3.2 From April 2007 HMIE and the Care Commission have been carrying out a revised, more proportionate model of integrated inspection. The key purposes are to:
- Build on the inspection information of all pre-school centres from April 2003 to March 2007 and reduce the frequency of inspection of pre-school education
  - Reintegrate nursery classes with HMIE primary school inspections
  - Inspect pre-school provision more proportionately to the need of the service
  - Identify and share best practice in pre-school provision
  - Continue to use the combined expertise of HMIE, Associate Assessors (AAs) and Care Commission Officers (CCOs).

The cycle for integrated inspections will follow the same cycle as for primary schools, currently a 7-year generational one. The frequency of follow-through visits will be decided either on the basis of the quality of provision evaluated during integrated inspections, to assess authority evaluations, or to provide

intelligence for HMIE about good practice. It may also take account of Care Commission information on complaints and requirements.

3.3 The performance of a pre-school centre is measured jointly by HM Inspectors of Education or Associate Assessors and Care Commission Officers in an Integrated Inspection. They use quality indicators, described in “*The Child at the Centre*” (TCATC), a group of standards of the “*National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare Up To Age 16*” (Care Standards) and the key aspects of children’s development and learning as described in *A Curriculum Framework For Children 3 To 5*”. All partner providers of pre-school education and local authority nursery classes in Moray have copies of these documents and are required to use them in their own self-evaluation and improvement planning. The quality indicators, care standards and programmes of learning which were inspected are attached to this report as **Appendix 1**.

3.4 Most of the assessments within Integrated Inspection reports are written using ‘standardised’ language and ascribed a level from 1 – 6:

<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>Adequate</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 through pre-school centres, Council Headquarters, HMIE, the Care Commission and online at [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk) and [www.carecommission.com](http://www.carecommission.com).

3.6 The pre-school centres and the authority will address, together, the improvement objectives identified within the **Integrated Inspections**. **Appendix 1** provides more details on the procedure following an Integrated Inspection.

3.7 During this reporting period there was 1 **Integrated Inspection** report published. This was for St Sylvester’s Nursery, Elgin. The main points arising from the report is summarised in **Appendix 2**. A copy of the report is available in the Members’ Library.

3.8 Since April 2007, the format of Integrated Inspection reports has changed and Appendices have been updated accordingly.

#### 4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan**

This report meets the stated aims of the Educational Programme of the Corporate Plan.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

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)**

There are no immediate Financial, Staffing, Environmental or Sustainable Development implications arising from this report.

**(d) Consultations**

Members of the Senior Management Team within Educational Services, Jim Gibson, Quality Improvement Officer, Karen Wiles, Principal Solicitor, Legal Services, and Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant, have been consulted and agree with the relevant sections of the report.

**5. CONCLUSION**

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

Author of Report: Sheena Duffus, Quality Improvement Officer Pre 5  
Background Papers:  
Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/Education and Social Services Committee/  
13 February 2008/Integrated Inspections of Pre-School Centres -  
Published Reports from August 2007 to January 2008

**APPENDIX 1**

**The Quality Indicators**

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 age 16*”

and *“The Child at the Centre”*. The following standards and related quality indicators were used in the inspections.

National Care Standards	Child at the Centre Quality Indicator
Standard 4 – Engaging with Children Standard 5 – Quality of Experience	Staff/child interaction Structure of the curriculum Children’s progress and development and learning through play
Standard 6 – Support and Development	Meeting children’s needs and care routines Partnership with parents
Standard 14 – Well-managed Service	Leadership and Self-evaluation

### **Programmes of Learning Assessed in Reports**

The evaluations of the above are qualitative.

### **Procedure Following an Integrated Inspection**

The pre-school centre and the education authority are asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share the plan with parents and carers. In liaison with the pre-school centre and the education authority, Care Commission Officers and HM Inspectors will monitor progress to ensure improvements are in line with the main findings of the report.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **INTEGRATED INSPECTIONS**

1. **St Sylvester’s Nursery, Elgin** – published on 23 January 2008

**Key Strengths identified:**

- Very well-behaved and responsive children.
- Very good curriculum provided for children aged two to three years.
- Children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world, expressive and aesthetic development and physical development and movement.
- Very positive partnership with parents.
- Very effective and supportive teamwork among staff.

**Recommendations for improvement:**

- The manager and staff should provide more opportunities for children to carry out investigations, experiment and solve simple problems.
- Staff should improve their questioning skills to extend children's learning and ensure that all children are challenged appropriately.
- The manager and staff should improve the programmes in communication and language and early mathematics.

**Requirements**

- The provider must ensure the fitness of employees. In order to achieve this the provider must ensure that checks through Disclosure Scotland are carried out and completed prior to employment. (Timescale – within 24 hours of the issuing of this report)

**Issues from previous inspections**

At the last Care Commission singleton inspection there were two recommendations. These recommendations had been addressed.

**Authority Commentary**

This is a very positive report which clearly acknowledges the strengths of the centre and identifies areas for improvement.