

**Leaps & Bounds Nursery
Paisley
4 November 2009**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects centres in order to let parents¹, children and the local community know whether their centre provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with centre staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the head of centre and staff about the strengths of the centre, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into playrooms and join other activities which children are involved in. We also gather the views of parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the centre. We describe how well children are doing, how good the centre is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the centre. We also comment on how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the centre is led and how all staff help the centre achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals. Where applicable, you will also be able to find descriptions of good practice in the centre.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends

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1. The centre

Leaps & Bounds Nursery was inspected in September by HMIE on behalf of both HMIE and the Care Commission as part of the integrated inspection programme. The centre caters for pre-school children aged six weeks to five years old. It is registered for 84 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 106 at the time of the inspection.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Welcoming, positive atmosphere of the nursery.
- Confident children who are motivated and enthusiastic about their learning.
- Positive and supportive relationships between children, staff and parents.
- Impact of the eco school initiative on improving children's knowledge of recycling and growing food.
- Development of outdoor area.

3. Example of good practice

- *'I know, I wonder, I learned'* – Involving children in identifying next steps in learning.

4. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children across the nursery are enthusiastic about their learning both indoors and in the garden area. Babies and toddlers enjoy exploring and discovering their environment. Babies are supported by staff and helped to settle into their nursery routine. Toddlers are becoming confident in making choices about what they want to do. Older children are forming friendships and learning to share and take turns

when playing games. They are motivated by their chosen activities and are often absorbed in their play. They are confident in making choices about what they want to do and are actively involved in learning through play. Children are consulted about what they are going to learn. They talk confidently about their planning and '*wonder*' questions that they use to help identify what they want to learn. They are developing confidence in evaluating their own learning experiences.

Children in the nursery are proud of their achievements in making changes to their outdoor area through their nursery eco project. They will happily talk about their involvement in growing and harvesting a variety of vegetables and using them to make soup or their snack. They understand the importance of recycling and are confident when sorting items to take to the local collection point. They understand the importance of saving electricity and will remind adults to switch off lights when leaving a playroom.

Children aged three to five are making good progress in their learning. Children listen well to stories and enjoy looking at books that are available throughout the nursery. They enjoy mark making in various areas, including the writing table. Children particularly like role-play in the nursery 'shoe shop'. They talk about planning the design of the shop and the mind map on the wall that shows their planning. They are able to recognise some coins and match colours of shoes and bags confidently. Most children are able to count to ten and a few can count beyond.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff plan effectively for children using national and local guidance. A broad range of experiences are planned for children under three, taking into account requests and routines from home to ensure continuity of care. These youngest children are actively encouraged to explore their environments both indoors and out. They have experiences that help them discover and learn about the world using all their senses. Staff have begun to make changes to their planning

for children aged three to five in line with advice and training in *Curriculum for Excellence*. Staff are aware that there is scope to increase opportunities for children to develop early literacy and numeracy skills in all areas of the playroom. Staff use encouragement and praise consistently and appropriately. They know children well as individuals and encourage them to communicate, show curiosity and experience joy in their learning and development. Staff working with older children use a good range of questioning to help children think and problem solve.

Staff working with children under three are responsive to their needs. They help all children in the nursery to be active, independent learners. Most activities are well matched to children's development and learning needs. However, some children would benefit from a greater level of challenge in their learning. Children needing additional support in their learning have individualised educational programmes. Staff work well with parents and other agencies, as required, to help provide additional support for children's learning and development.

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

Parents of babies like the daily feedback sheets that are completed by staff. They find the information helpful and reassuring. A few parents would like more regular information about older children. There is a range of useful information for parents on notice boards, in monthly newsletters and on the nursery website. Children are very well supported when moving rooms. They have a series of visits and each move is planned on an individual basis. Progress information about children moving to P1 is passed on from the nursery. They also invite teachers from the receiving schools to visit the nursery. Staff are aware that information about children's learning and progress needs to be shared if children attend another centre.

6. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?

Parents' views are gathered through the Parent Council, eco committee and a variety of questionnaires. Action points for improvements are shared with parents through displays and newsletters. Children are regularly asked for their views and opinions. Staff help identify areas for development through group discussions. As a result of the good self-evaluation over the last few years, children's learning experiences have improved. Children, parents and staff are proud of their recent summer fete. This event helped raise money for a school community in Uganda. Staff and parents intend to increase children's learning about other cultures by developing this link.

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

The nursery has a calm and friendly atmosphere where everyone is welcome. Relationships are supportive, caring and respectful throughout the nursery. All staff have had child protection training and know what to do to keep children safe. All children are treated fairly and with dignity. Children celebrate a variety of festivals and take part in activities that help them understand other cultures and beliefs. Staff have high expectations for children's care and welfare. Children are encouraged to be considerate of others and staff promote positive behaviour. Children enjoy a choice of fruits and vegetables for snack times. They have freshly cooked lunches prepared by the nursery chef. Parents attended a workshop to learn some of the nursery 'yummy' recipes.

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

The owners and manager are clearly committed to providing a quality service. They are supportive to staff and actively encourage and celebrate staff professional developments. The enthusiastic and

hardworking staff have successfully taken forward identified priorities. This has led to improvements in the outdoor area, approaches to planning and consulting with children to help them learn. Support from the local authority has been well received and had a direct impact on children's learning and staff confidence.

What happens next?

We are confident that the centre will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The centre and the education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress in improving the quality of education.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- Continue to develop early literacy and numeracy skills through play.
- Increase the levels of challenge for more able children.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the centre there were four recommendations. All recommendations have since been addressed.

Quality indicators help centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a centre. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish centres are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Leaps & Bounds Nursery.

Improvements in performance	good
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

Managing Inspector: Mary Ann Hagan
4 November 2009

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means	outstanding, sector leading
very good	means	major strengths
good	means	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	means	major weaknesses

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