

23 November 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

**Cranley Buckstone Nursery**  
**Edinburgh**

Recently, as you may know, I visited and inspected your child's pre-school centre. Throughout my visit I talked to parents and children and I worked closely with the management team and staff. I wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the pre-school centre supported children to do their best. The management team shared with me the pre-school centre's successes and priorities for improvement. I looked at some particular aspects of the pre-school centre's recent work including how well they work with partners, opportunities for staff to lead and develop aspects of the nursery and how effectively staff extend children's learning. As a result, I was able to find out how good the pre-school centre was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what I found.

**How well do children learn and achieve?**

I am confident that your children learn and achieve very well. Across the nursery, children are happy, settled and secure with daily routines in their playrooms. They enjoy regular play experiences outdoors in well resourced play areas. Babies enjoy a wide range of sensory experiences. Tweenies and Juniors are learning to make friends. They are beginning to cooperate and share their toys. Almost all children in the Senior playroom are motivated, enthusiastic and get excited about their learning. They approach activities with confidence. They help plan and take responsibility for their learning in a variety of ways. For example, joining staff at weekly planning meetings and through discussion at circle time. Children enjoy being given additional responsibilities, such as being eco warriors and looking after their two guinea pigs.

Across the nursery, children are developing a variety of skills such as measurement, literacy and social skills, through regular baking activities. Older children are very proud of their Eco-Schools Scotland Silver award. They are encouraged to recycle paper, card and plastics and conserve energy and water in their playrooms. They bring in household rubbish to make junk models. Children are becoming increasingly aware of how to keep themselves safe and healthy through regular hygiene routines, learning about healthy foods and the importance of regular physical exercise.

Almost all children aged three to five are making very good progress across early literacy and language development. They listen very well and are gaining confidence talking to each other and adults. Children look at a wide range of books and newspapers. They enjoy acting out favourite stories using props. Children are confident when approaching early writing and are enthusiastic about drawing and mark-making using a variety of materials. Displays around the playrooms ensure your children feel their attempts at early writing are celebrated and

valued by staff. Children are making very good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. They learn about numbers in all areas of the playroom and are learning to recognise coins and their value. They are developing their understanding of various mathematical concepts and language through a variety of play activities. They recognise basic shapes and their properties and use bar charts well to display recycling information.

### **How well does the pre-school centre support children to develop and learn?**

I am confident that the nursery supports your children to develop and learn very well. Staff working with children under three plan an appropriate range of multi-sensory learning experiences using information from national guidance. Staff working with children aged three to five use Curriculum for Excellence with confidence, to provide a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities. Staff use specialists and the local community well to enhance children's learning. They incorporate Zumba and French sessions and regular visits to the local shops and park into children's learning. Staff make very good use of the outdoor area and balcony. They encourage children to develop their physical skills to explore and develop their knowledge of the world around them. Staff provide many opportunities for you to be involved in your child's learning. These include a variety of Home Bags, Bertie Bear and monthly theme sheets. Staff have established some effective measures to support children moving into primary school.

Staff are kind and caring in all interactions with your children. They are skilled at responding to children's needs and interests as they arise during play. Staff observe children closely and document their successes in personal Learning Stories. They now need to build on their methods of tracking children's progress to ensure they have a more solid understanding of how children are progressing. On the whole, staff provide appropriate learning materials and opportunities to challenge your children. However, staff now need to develop further their questioning techniques to help children develop further their thinking skills and extend their learning. Children requiring additional support are identified early by staff. Staff develop individual support plans and work well alongside parents and partner agencies to set appropriate targets for children. Staff successfully incorporate advice and resources provided by partner agencies into their planning to support individual children.

### **How well does the pre-school centre improve the quality of its work?**

I am confident that the nursery is improving the quality of its work. The owner, managers and staff team demonstrate a strong commitment to the life and work of the nursery and its continuous improvement. Regular staff and management meetings allow staff to come together to talk about and share their work. Staff share knowledge and skills gained from external training with each other. This compliments the very good range of in-house training organised by the area manager. Staff appreciate these opportunities and talk confidently about the impact on their own practice and on children's experiences. The owner and management team actively encourage staff to take on leadership roles. Staff are very enthusiastic to develop further their expertise and confidence in this way. Systems for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the nursery are helping to identify what they do well and what needs to improve. These include effective and imaginative approaches to consulting the views of children and parents. Staff now need to develop a more focused approach to monitoring and evaluating to ensure suggested improvements have a positive impact on children's learning. With the very enthusiastic and capable whole staff team and continued strong relationship with the local authority, the nursery is very well placed to continue to develop further and improve.

Our inspection of your pre-school centre found the following key strengths.

- Enthusiastic and well behaved children who enjoy very good learning experiences.
- Children's progress in all aspects of their learning and development.
- The highly motivated and enthusiastic whole staff team who work well together to improve learning and teaching.
- Very effective leadership for learning.
- Positive partnerships with parents, local nurseries, the community and the local authority.

I discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the pre-school centre. This is what I agreed with them.

- Continue to develop appropriate assessment and tracking systems to ensure all children are making progress within Curriculum for Excellence.
- Build further on approaches to self-evaluation and monitoring.

### **WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INSPECTION?**

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the pre-school centre's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The management team and local authority will inform parents about the pre-school centre's progress as part of the arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the pre-school centre.

Juliet Colquhoun  
Managing Inspector  
23 November 2011

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=12173&type=1> .

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at [enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact 01506 600200, or write to us at the above address or e-mail: [feedback@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:feedback@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk).