

**First Adventures  
Nursery-Turret Towers  
Linlithgow  
West Lothian  
20 October 2010**

This report tells you about the quality of education at the centre. We describe how children benefit from learning there. We explain how well they are doing and how good the centre is at helping them to learn. Then we look at the ways in which the centre does this. We describe how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including parents<sup>1</sup> and services which support children. We also comment on how well staff and children work together and how they go about improving the centre.

Our report describes the 'ethos' of the centre. By 'ethos' we mean the relationships in the centre, how well children are cared for and treated and how much is expected of them in all aspects of centre life. Finally, we comment on the centre's aims. In particular, we focus on how well the aims help staff to deliver high-quality learning, and the impact of leadership on the centre's success in achieving these aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). Where applicable, the website contains analyses of questionnaire returns and descriptions of good practice in the centre.

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<sup>1</sup> 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**

First Adventures Nursery – Turret Towers was inspected in August 2010 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 two to five years. It is registered for 59 children aged birth to five attending at any one session with a maximum of 18 children under two years. The total roll was 92 at the time of the inspection.

## **2. Particular strengths of the centre**

- Confident, happy and independent children who enjoy high quality experiences.
- Strong partnerships with parents and the community.
- Children's exciting outdoor learning experiences.
- The enthusiastic and motivated staff team who work very well together.
- Vision of the hard-working head of centre, management team and all staff to improve the nursery.

## **3. How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **Learning and achievement**

Across the nursery, children are confident, happy and independent. Children under three engage very well with a wide range of quality resources. They have developed close relationships with adults and are beginning to develop relationships with each other. They are becoming independent when tidying-up at snack time. The majority can persevere independently, exploring a variety of resources in the playroom and outdoors. They are encouraged to be sociable and interact appropriately with the other young children. Children aged three to five years are well-behaved and most are highly motivated. They are forming friendships and show respect for each other. Most are able to concentrate well during whole-group activities, story and circle time. Children are developing skills of negotiation and collaboration when working together at tasks such as digging up potatoes. While exploring and investigating their outdoor environment,

they are showing their increasing abilities to solve problems. Children achieve success when, for example, taking part in awards and raising funds for the nursery and for charity. They are particularly enthusiastic about their exciting outdoor learning experiences and enjoy the challenge of playing energetically in the 'Wild Wood'. They are aware of how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

Children aged three to five are making very good progress in their learning. Almost all are developing their skills in talking and listening very well. They listen carefully, take part in extended discussions and respond enthusiastically to stories, songs and music. The majority use the book corner independently. Almost all children are developing a very good awareness of letter sounds. Most recognise their name in print and the majority can write their name. In early mathematics, almost all children identify and use numbers and colours very well during play and counting games. Almost all recognise two-dimensional shapes and a few can name a selection of three-dimensional objects. They identify patterns and colours in the world around them and can sort, match, group, measure and weigh at an appropriate level. Children use metre sticks to measure the length of the play ground and measuring tapes to measure their own height.

### **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

In the playroom for under threes, children have very good opportunities to participate in a wide range of high-quality learning experiences. Staff use the national guidance *Birth to Three* to plan for children's learning. They observe children's learning and use photographic evidence effectively to record their individual achievements. Staff know children very well. They organise motivating activities which ensure children experience both fun and success. Across the nursery, staff meet regularly to evaluate children's learning and to plan together. Staff working with children aged three to five use the experiences and outcomes from *Curriculum for Excellence* well to plan a broad and balanced range of activities to help children learn. Children have good opportunities to express their views and plan their own learning but there is scope for staff to extend

this further. Early literacy and numeracy experiences are well developed across all key aspects of the curriculum. Children take part regularly in art, craft, singing and role-play. They explore using a range of information communications technology (ICT) including computers and an interactive whiteboard. Children investigate the natural world through growing fruit and vegetables and observing tiny animals under stones and the rotting log pile. They watch the change from tadpole to frog in their small outdoor pond.

Staff know children and their families very well and are highly sensitive to their individual circumstances and needs. They interact with children in a way which builds confidence, encourages and values their contributions. They provide quality support for children who need extra help with their learning. Staff in the nursery liaise very closely with parents, other agencies and professionals to assist children who need additional help. As a result children are making very good progress with their learning.

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

Staff make parents very welcome and provide many worthwhile opportunities for them to be involved. There is a high level of parental satisfaction with the nursery and its role is highly regarded. Staff keep parents well informed through helpful newsletters, regular e-mail, an informative website and a daily update sheet. Staff provide parents with an annual written report about their child's progress and add information regularly to each child's 'Individual Learner's Journey' which they share with parents as appropriate. They value the effective support provided by the education authority. Staff have formed useful partnerships with a range of agencies to help children improve their learning. They help children make successful transitions into the nursery, through the playrooms and on to primary school.

## **5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?**

Staff, parents and children work very well together to improve the work of the nursery. They contribute their ideas about the nursery regularly and have helped to establish priorities for improvement. Staff have identified clearly priorities for improvement and work well together to take these forward. An improvement plan is in place and staff implement its priorities very well. Their work is having a significant effect on children's learning and development. Staff have benefited from a wide range of training which has led to improvements. They share good practice regularly with each other. The head of centre and the management team monitor the work of staff effectively and provide them with helpful information to improve their practice.

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

The nursery has a positive and supportive ethos with a strong sense of mutual respect between staff and children. Staff have close relationships with children and their extended families. They have high expectations of children's behaviour and use a range of effective strategies to encourage positive behaviour and good manners. They provide valued support to children and families. Staff are alert to the care and wellbeing of all children and understand their role in protecting children from harm. All staff have been trained in child protection policy and procedures. They encourage children to make healthy choices, for example, by providing healthy snacks and regular tooth brushing.

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

The hard-working head of centre, management team and all staff are committed to continuous improvement of the nursery. They recognise what needs to be improved and regularly plan together how to take forward the work of the nursery. The enthusiastic and motivated staff

team work very well together. They respond enthusiastically to new initiatives and opportunities to be innovative in their work with children. The head of centre, management team and staff have a shared and ambitious vision for the nursery which fully reflects its aims, values and role within the community. This is having a positive impact on the quality of children's experiences and learning. Under the strong leadership of the head of centre and management team, the nursery is well placed to improve further.

## **8. What happens next?**

The nursery provides a very good quality of education. Therefore, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The education authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its schools.

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

- Continue to take forward *Curriculum for Excellence* and develop further opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own learning.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the centre there was one requirement which has 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 First Adventures Nursery-Turret Towers.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Children's experiences</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>very good</b>

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

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>very good</b>

**Managing Inspector:** Gill McKinnon  
20 October 2010

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Our complaints procedure is available from our website [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk) or alternatively you can write to our Complaints Manager, at the address above or by telephoning 01506 600259 or the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY.

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 (SPSO). The SPSO is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to SPSO, 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 at [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk).

This report uses the following word scale to make clear judgements made by inspectors.

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

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