

21 April 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

**First Nursery Ltd  
Peebles**

Recently, as you may know, my colleague and I visited and inspected your child's early learning and childcare setting. Throughout our visit we talked to parents and children and we worked closely with the managers and staff. We wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the early learning and childcare setting supported children to do their best. The managers shared with us the early learning and childcare setting's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the early learning and childcare setting's recent work including outdoor learning, parental involvement, aspects of health and wellbeing and children's learning folders. As a result, we were able to find out how good the early learning and childcare setting was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what we found.

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

We found that children are happy and enjoy their experiences in the setting. Babies and children under three are sensitively supported by staff and encouraged to explore the environment around them. Babies enjoy taking part in a range of sensory activities where they investigate natural materials and experiment with art resources. Children under three show enthusiasm when playing outdoors and developing their physical skills. Children aged three to five engage very well in a range of activities which stimulate their interest. They show confidence and a strong motivation in their play with, almost all, being able to persevere with tasks for lengthy periods of time. Children are developing a good sense of responsibility by, for example, helping at snack and lunch times and when helping at tidy up times. We have asked staff to consider increasing these opportunities for children to be responsible in the life of the setting perhaps by creating more specific roles for them. Older children are involved purposefully in planning aspects of their own learning through, for example, floorbooks. They are also developing an awareness of themselves as learners when, for example, reflecting on their 'SMILE' folders. Overall children achieve well across a range of areas. Their achievements, from

home and nursery, are celebrated well on displays in the playrooms and in their 'SMILE' folders. Children experience success in their local community through, for example, taking an active part in the Beltane Festival. Through raising money for charity, children are developing a positive awareness of others.

Almost all children aged three to five are making very good progress in developing their early language and mathematical skills. They listen with curiosity to stories and talk very confidently to adults and each other. Children enjoy looking at books and are becoming confident discussing books and stories they like. As part of World Book Day, children enjoyed dressing up as characters from books. Children show confidence in exploring different mark-making materials. Almost all display an increasing interest in early writing. Through a wide range of play activities, children are developing skills in counting and use numbers very well. They show an understanding of the language of measurement and size when, for example, preparing vegetables to make soup. Children are developing a sound awareness of shape as they play in the construction area and when creating collage work in the art area. Children are also making appropriate progress across other areas of the curriculum. They are developing their skills in science and experimentation through, for example, learning about growing cress and planting outdoors. They sense the fun of science when exploring how kites fly in the nearby playing field. Older children talk knowledgeably about what they have been learning when identifying birds in their recent bird watch. Across the setting, children are developing an understanding of healthy eating supported very well by the nursery's clear commitment to providing nutritious food.

### **How well does the early learning and childcare setting support children to develop and learn?**

In all playrooms, staff meet the needs of children very well. They interact warmly with children, encouraging and praising their efforts. As a result, staff have created a very inclusive ethos with a high level of pastoral care. Tasks and activities provided for children are appropriately stimulating and challenging. They help motivate children, sustain their interest and meet their needs very well. Children under three particularly enjoy finding out about how ice melts whilst older children show a keen interest in problem-solving in the outdoor area. Across the nursery, staff make regular observations of children's learning. They are aware they should continue to develop their approach to this ensuring clearer links are made in identifying and supporting the progress of individual children. This will help staff in identifying next steps in children's learning and making these link more closely with children's 'SMILE' folders. Whilst staff discuss children's care with parents informally and regularly, there is a need for this to be developed more formally into care plans. Staff provide very good support to children, who may need additional help with their learning, linking with relevant professionals as necessary. Parents support the work of the setting very well and the recently-introduced 'Come and Play' sessions are well received. The setting is keen to involve all parents even further in their children's learning.

Staff working with babies and children under three plan an appropriate range of activities using national guidance. For children aged three to five, staff are responsive to their interests and provide a broad and balanced range of learning

experiences. Staff use Curriculum for Excellence guidance well when planning the curriculum. They ensure that activities are based on what is relevant to children's lives. Staff show a strong commitment to using the outdoors as an important aspect of the curriculum. They do this very well. Staff encourage children to be aware of their local area by, for example, visiting local shops. They use links with local schools to enhance the curriculum such as visiting Peebles High School to follow up an interest in woodwork. We have discussed with the setting the need to continue with plans to develop the curriculum further and fully. This will support staff in developing a shared understanding of how the curriculum is designed. Arrangements for children transferring to primary schools are supportive. We have also discussed with the managers how the nursery is in a confident position to take a greater lead in developing aspects of this further.

### **How well does the early learning and childcare setting improve the quality of its work?**

The manager and staff are very committed to continuing to improve the setting. They are well-respected by parents who value the nurturing and inclusive ethos throughout the setting. Together with staff, the managers have made positive improvements to the environment for learning. These improvements have been planned well and are shown most clearly through developments in outdoor learning. The managers value their staff team and support their development as skilled practitioners. As a result, staff have a very good range of opportunities to attend training, as well as participating professionally in the regular staff team meetings. This is having a clear impact on improvements in the setting and the quality of experiences for children. The managers have implemented a number of strategies to monitor the progress of children and work of the setting. Staff are, however, aware that these need further time and focus to impact fully on practice. In order to support this, we have asked the setting to develop a calendar of monitoring activities. All of this, together with the continued support from Scottish Borders Council, puts the setting in a strong position to continue to improve and develop further the quality experiences it already provides for children.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and two recommendations. From these, two recommendations have been met.

Our inspection of your early learning and childcare setting found the following key strengths.

- Happy, confident children who enjoy their time in the setting.
- The leadership of the managers and teamwork of staff in creating an inclusive ethos.
- Support for children and their families.
- Children's experiences particularly in the outdoors.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the early learning and childcare setting. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue with plans to develop the curriculum.
- Ensure that strategies to monitor the work of the setting and children's progress become fully embedded in practice.
- Continue with plans to develop further children's SMILE folders giving a greater focus to next steps in learning.

### **What happens at the end of the inspection?**

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

Alan Urquhart  
HM Inspector

Allison Tyson  
Care Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations for your setting can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/eyc/FirstNurseryPeeblesScottishBorders.asp>

If you would like to receive this report in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0141 282 5000, or e-mail: [complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Quality indicators help early learning and childcare settings, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the early learning and childcare setting. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *Child at the Centre(2)*<sup>1</sup>. Following our inspection of each early learning and childcare setting, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish early learning and childcare settings are doing.

Here are the evaluations for **First Nursery Ltd**

<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 early learning and childcare setting

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

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for **First Nursery Ltd**

<b>Quality of care and support</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Quality of environment</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Quality of staffing</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Quality of management and leadership</b>	<b>good</b>

As a result of this inspection there are no requirements and three recommendations.

<sup>1</sup> *The Child at the Centre, Self-Evaluation in the early years*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, [http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/TheChildattheCentreSelfevaluationintheEarlyYears\\_tcm4-684267.pdf](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/TheChildattheCentreSelfevaluationintheEarlyYears_tcm4-684267.pdf)

## Recommendations

- All children using the service should have a written care plan, which sets out how the nursery will meet their health, welfare and safety needs. Plans should be reviewed with parents and children at least every six months or more often when there is a significant change. Management and staff, with parents, should bring all the information for children together so that it forms a plan, which is reviewed formally and clearly shows how children's needs are met.  
National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 6 – Support and development.
- The service should ensure that people are safe and protected by keeping a signing in and signing out record for persons, employed in the provision of the service each day and this includes people visiting the service each day.  
National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 2 – A safe environment.
- Care services must make notifications to the Care Inspectorate about particular matters, which are listed on the Care Inspectorate website. Management should update the relevant policies and procedures so that notifications are made as required.  
National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 14 – Well-managed service.

A notification from the Care Inspectorate will be sent to the provider to complete an action plan to address the recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

A copy of the full letter is available on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/eyc/FirstNurseryPeeblesScottishBorders.asp>

[http://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=7644&Itemid=489](http://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7644&Itemid=489)