



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



Providing Inspection Services for
**Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of an Inspection

**174 Trust Playgroup
Belfast**

Inspected: November 2007

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	174 Trust Playgroup
Address:	Duncairn Complex Duncairn Avenue BELFAST BT14 6BP
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	19 November 2007
Date of previous inspection:	25 November 2002

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	12	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	9	-
• funded by Department of Education	9	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	-
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	-
• with English as an additional language	2	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
Attendance:		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	98.5%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	0
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	3	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: **	
Students	1
Trainees	1

** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session	Number of days open in previous year
4 hours	-	188

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	12
Percentage returned:	42.7%
Number of written comments:	2

174 TRUST PLAYGROUP, BELFAST, BT14 6BP (1AB-0427)

1. The centre is situated in dedicated playrooms accommodation within the 174 Trust community building which is shared with other organisations. Since the last inspection in 2002, a new playgroup assistant and a new early years specialist (EYS) have been appointed. The optimum number of places available in the playgroup has been reduced from 24 to 18; nine of these places are funded. The accommodation has been renovated to provide one large playroom. The staff have attended a range of relevant training.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the centre through the inspection questionnaires. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection. Those who responded indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection has important strengths. The pre-school centre has appropriate policies and procedures for child protection. Staff are aware of the need to update their training in child protection. The inspection evidence indicates that the policies and procedures are implemented consistently by the staff.

4. The pre-school's programme for the promotion of health and well-being has strengths, with a developing commitment to encourage the children to eat healthily and be physically active.

5. The main strengths within the centre's educational and pastoral provision are as follows.

- The centre has a positive ethos based on very good relationships and a sense of mutual respect which builds the children's confidence and self-esteem. There is a very strong sense of team-work among the hard-working staff.
- The skill of the staff in interacting effectively with the children is a key strength of the centre. The staff listen carefully to the children, build on their own ideas and exploit the learning opportunities within the activities to promote enjoyment, language and learning.
- The staff provide a learning environment which is based on the principles of the HighScope programme. There are good or very good opportunities to promote learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Particular strengths of the programme include the promotion of the children's language, creativity and early mathematical concepts.
- The children demonstrate a strong interest in books, both in the story corner and within areas of play.
- The children are well motivated and many demonstrate high levels of concentration and perseverance.
- The organisation of the day is very well managed; the wide range of appropriate experiences and daily routines are used effectively to promote learning.

6. The inspection identified areas for improvement. The following are the most important areas that need attention. The staff should continue to:

- develop the written planning to ensure there is sufficient challenge and progression in all areas of the curriculum over the two year programme;
- review and develop their skill in using their new assessment methods to meet the needs of individual children; and
- develop methods to involve the parents more fully in their children's education.

7. The staff have recently received training on development planning. They have made a useful start to evaluating aspects of their work and have identified some appropriate areas for further development. The staff, management and EYS should now draw up a development plan and identify clearly the actions required to bring about continuous improvement. The contribution made by the centre's EYS has some strengths. However, the sporadic nature of recent support has impeded progress in some important areas of practice.

8. The pre-school centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified minor areas for improvement which the centre has the capacity to address.

The pre-school centre's progress on the areas for improvement will be followed-up by monitoring visits, conducted by the District Inspector.

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