



*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**



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

Armoy Cross-Community Playgroup Ballymoney

September 2011

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ARMOY CROSS-COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, BALLYMONEY, CO ANTRIM, BT53 8RQ (3AB-0354)

The inspection in Armoyn Cross-Community Playgroup, Ballymoney in October 2008 highlighted strengths in the interaction of the staff with the children and also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the quality of the planning in order to demonstrate development in the children's learning, links to differing needs and to provide evidence of adequate challenge and progression throughout the year;
- the child protection required updating, full implementation by the staff and sharing with the parents; and
- the skill of the staff to record and evaluate the children's learning.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the playgroup have taken place.

- The leader has been on a prolonged period of absence.
- The assistant leader has been acting up in the leadership position since November 2010.
- There have been two changes of early years specialist (EYS), the most recent took up post in June 2011.
- The staff have attended a range of relevant training.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two monitoring visits and a follow-up inspection on the 20 September 2011.

The action plan received by the Department of Education following the inspection was of a satisfactory quality. Initial implementation of the action plan had been inconsistent due to staff absences and changes in roles and responsibilities.

Good progress has now been made in the areas of improvement identified during the original inspection. This has had a positive impact on the overall quality of the provision.

The following are the most important improvements since the original inspection:

- all of the policies and procedures have been updated and shared with the parents, including those for pastoral care and child protection;
- the children have better opportunities to engage in a good range of regular physical activities both indoors and outdoors;
- the planning informs the staff more effectively in their provision of a broad and balanced programme which is more responsive to the needs and interests of the children;
- the quality of the children's learning is now good or very good in all areas of the pre-school curriculum;

- the staff take a more systematic and skilful approach to recording the children's progress and are making progress in using this information to meet individual children's needs and interests; and
- the acting leader, staff and the former EYS from the Early Years Organisation have worked well as a team to bring about improvement.

The areas which need further improvement are the need to:

- define more clearly on the plans, the nature of the support to be provided for individual children; and
- continue to develop the planning for physical and outdoor play.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education and pastoral care provided by this playgroup is now good. The playgroup has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the areas for improvement still need to be addressed but equally the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

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