



*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

of

**Brownlee Playgroup by Little Rays
Lisburn**

October 2014

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF BROWNLEE PLAYGROUP BY LITTLE RAYS (4BA-0602)

The inspection of Brownlee Playgroup by Little Rays, in November 2012, evaluated the provision overall as inadequate. The inspection report highlighted strengths including:

- the children's listening skills during the story session and their good behaviour;
- the good quality interactions of the staff with the children;
- the development of the children's early mathematical language; and
- the good quality of the arrangements for pastoral care.

It also identified the need for the playgroup to:

- develop the planning and the use made of the evaluations and the observations in order to best meet the needs of individual children and to achieve progression in the children's learning;
- ensure there are appropriate policies and rigorous procedures in place for safeguarding the children; and
- develop a consistent staff development programme that progresses the staff's professional skills and expertise to implement self-evaluative practice and to deliver a high quality pre-school provision.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out a child protection/safeguarding follow-up visit in January 2013; interim follow-up visits in October 2013 and March 2014; and a follow-up inspection on 2 October 2014.

The action plan received by the Department of Education (DE) following the inspection was of a satisfactory quality and was subsequently updated to take account of interim inspection findings.

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

- a new leader and additional member of staff have been appointed;
- the staff have availed of a range of external professional development opportunities and have also continued to receive effective support from the early years' specialist;
- links with other settings have been strengthened to build the capacity of the leader to lead and manage the playgroup, in particular an effective curricular link has been established with the foundation stage teachers in the adjacent primary school;
- investment has been made to provide additional resources and materials to support the children's learning and play, both in the playroom and in the outdoor area; and
- safeguarding arrangements have been reviewed and aligned with DE guidance.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the staff have developed a more reflective approach to their practice and are beginning to develop a greater understanding of self-evaluation leading to improvement;
- the staff are very good language role models for the children and use effective questioning to extend the children's talking and listening skills, and to develop their use and understanding of key vocabulary across all areas of the pre-school curriculum; and
- the playgroup has developed further the links with parents through, for example, the informative monthly newsletter and the 'sneak-a-peek' night which was established in response to consultation with parents.

At the time of the original inspection, safeguarding arrangements were evaluated as unsatisfactory. On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the follow-up inspection, the playgroup now has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

Conclusion

In the areas inspected the quality of education 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 an area for improvement which the playgroup has the capacity to address. The area for improvement is:

- for the staff to continue to develop a more integrated and consistent approach to observation, assessment and planning with a clear focus on progression and the individual learning needs of all the children.

The Education and Training inspectorate will monitor the playgroup's progress on the area for improvement.

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