



*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

**Holy Cross Playgroup
Belfast**

October 2011

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF HOLY CROSS PLAYGROUP, BELFAST, BT14 7EJ (1AB-0006)

The inspection in Holy Cross Playgroup in November 2010 highlighted strengths in the ethos and the breadth of the curriculum provided and also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the staff training and policies for Child Protection;
- the organisation of the latter part of the session;
- the planning and assessment methods; and
- the development of collaborative leadership and management to ensure high quality provision.

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

- A new assistant was appointed and took up post in March 2011.
- The staff have attended a Child Protection training course.
- The staff and a member of the management committee have attended a range of relevant training.
- There have been two changes in the early years specialist (EYS) from the Early Years Organisation.
- The management committee is in the process of being reconstituted.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out two monitoring visits and a follow up inspection on the 12 October 2011. The temporary relocation of the playgroup due to flooding in June 2011 delayed the completion of the follow up process.

The action plan received by the Department of Education following the inspection was of a good quality. It was reviewed and amended further by the playgroup in September 2011.

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

- the Child Protection policy provides clearer guidance for staff who are more informed about child protection matters;
- more rigorous processes are in place to ensure parents have received and read the playgroup's policies;
- the improvements in the organisation of the latter part of the day ensure that the children do not have to sit for prolonged periods;
- the leader and staff are more confident and effective in planning for most areas of the curriculum;
- improved systems are in place and are being used effectively to track the children's progress;

- the management committee are more involved in the work of the playgroup; and
- there has been very good recent support and guidance from the new EYS, who took up post in March 2011, and her manager.

The areas which require further improvement are the need to:

- document more clearly how the assessment information is used to identify and evaluate support for individual and groups of children; and
- improve the planning, use of resources and management of the physical play sessions.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh the areas for improvement. The playgroup has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but areas for improvement remain to be addressed if the needs of the children are to be met effectively.

The Inspectorate will monitor the playgroup's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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