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*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**

**Little People Pre-School Playgroup  
Newry**

**April 2014**

## **FOLLOW UP TO THE INSPECTION OF LITTLE PEOPLE PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP, NEWRY, CO DOWN, BT35 0HN (5AB-0192)**

The inspection in Little People Pre-school Playgroup in June 2012 evaluated the provision overall as satisfactory. The inspection report highlighted the following strengths:

- the confident, independent children who play together co-operatively;
- the bright, well-organised learning environment and the use of all of the available time for learning;
- the good quality of the arrangements for pastoral care;
- the good opportunities for learning in most areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- the good range of natural and man-made resources which support the children's learning across the curriculum; and
- the commitment of the Leader and staff to the continued development of the provision for the children.

It also identified the need for the playgroup to:

- develop further the observation, assessment and planning procedures in order to track the children's progress and to provide more challenge in their learning experiences;
- develop and embed a culture of self-evaluation to promote improvement; and
- access appropriate staff development and training which focuses more specifically on the delivery of the pre-school curriculum.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out interim follow-up visits in June and October 2013 and a follow-up inspection on 29 April 2014.

The action plan received by the Department of Education (DE) following the inspection was of a good quality.

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

- the leader and staff have developed a rigorous culture of self-evaluation which is clearly leading to improvement;
- the staff have developed effective procedures for observing, assessing and recording the children's progress;
- a special needs assistant has been appointed;
- education plans are now in place for the children who require additional support with their learning; and
- the staff have accessed a range of appropriate training to support the work of the playgroup.

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

- there is an appropriate three year development plan supplemented by clear action plans to further improve the work of the playgroup;
- the playgroup's medium and short-term planning is well informed by the staff's observations and assessments of the children's needs and interests;
- all of the children, are well settled for the time of year; they are engaged in sustained purposeful play indoors and outdoors, display high levels of independence and have very good social skills;
- there are now very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum, in particular the children have a range of very good opportunities throughout the playroom and outdoors to mark-make and experiment with early writing;
- the quality of the staffs' interactions with the children are now consistently of a high quality; they model good play, encourage the children to think and develop well their language skills through effective open ended conversations; and
- the playgroup has developed further the links with parents through the regular, informative newsletter which is linked closely the planned learning.

At the time of the original inspection, safeguarding arrangements were evaluated as satisfactory. 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 very good. The playgroup is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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