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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**

**Newtownabbey Methodist Mission Playgroup  
Co Antrim**

**November 2010**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF NEWTOWNABBEY METHODIST MISSION PLAYGROUP, CO ANTRIM, BT37 9AQ (3AA-0092)**

The inspection of Newtownabbey Methodist Mission Playgroup in February 2008 highlighted strengths in the caring ethos and the commitment to the children's welfare. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- to develop the staff's expertise in planning and evaluating a stimulating and challenging pre-school programme;
- to improve the quality of the interactions of the staff with the children; and
- to ensure the staff, management group and early years specialist (EYS) develop a more collaborative working partnership in order to improve their quality of the provision.

### **In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the pre-school centre have taken place:**

- the management group has introduced effective procedures for supporting the future development of the playgroup which includes the appointment of a new chairperson who liaises regularly with the leader;
- the staff have introduced new planning and assessment methods;
- a new leader was appointed and took up post in June 2010;
- the staff have visited other pre-school centres; and
- a set of chimes has been fitted to the playgroup door and people entering the premises are closely monitored by the staff.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out three interim follow-up visits in March 2009, November 2009, April 2010 and a follow-up inspection on 17 November 2010.

The action plan produced by the centre in response to the inspection findings was of a good quality. A new EYS began working with the pre-school in October 2010.

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

- the staff's interactions with the children are now more focused on extending the children's language, play and thinking skills;
- the majority of the children are involved purposefully in play experiences throughout the session;
- additional resources are regularly being acquired to augment the children's play experiences both indoors and for their physical play experiences;
- the children's language skills, attention span and personal, social and emotional development are developing appropriately for the time of year;

- effective systems of planning the programme and monitoring the children's progress are now in place which includes a weekly physical play programme;
- there are regular opportunities for the children to enjoy large group stories and physical play sessions which are thoughtfully planned; and
- the layout of the playroom and the presentation of the resources provide a more enriching learning environment.

The centre now promotes a self-evaluative culture where the management group and the staff are committed to continue to improve the quality of their provision for the children and the families within the Rathcoole community.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school 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 to be addressed but equally the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

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