



*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

**St John's Pre-School Playgroup
Belfast**

May 2011

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST JOHN'S PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP, BELFAST, BT12 6EN (1AB-0003)

The inspection in St John's Pre-school Playgroup in 2010 highlighted strengths in the ethos and the strong team approach among the staff and identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the quality of the staff interaction to promote language and learning; and
- the match of the pre-school programme to meet the needs of the wide range of children within the group.

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

- the acting leader was appointed as the permanent leader and took up post in October 2011;
- a new early years specialist (EYS) took up post in January 2011;
- the playgroup's hours have been reduced and additional time is planned and allocated for wraparound care; and
- an outdoor play area has been enclosed and is being landscaped.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out three monitoring visits and a follow-up inspection the 25 May 2011.

The action plan produced by the playgroup in response to the inspection findings was of a satisfactory quality and was adjusted appropriately in the light of feedback given by the Inspectorate during the monitoring visits.

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

- the quality of the learning environment within the playroom has been improved through the introduction of a wider and more interesting range of resources;
- the children demonstrate higher level of engagement in their play and spend more sustained periods of time at activities;
- there are better opportunities for the children to learn in all areas of the pre-school curriculum including listening skills, mark-making, use of books, early science and mathematics;
- the staff team all have higher expectations of what the children can achieve and have improved their skill and understanding of how to deliver an effective pre-school programme;
- the staff interact more skilfully with the children to promote settled play, and extend the children's language and thinking; and
- most of the children are making good progress in their learning.

The areas which need further improvement are the need:

- to improve the management of transition points during the daily routine to avoid unnecessary disruption to play and lengthy periods of waiting by the children;
- to continue to develop the skill of the staff in using their records of observation to identify and provide appropriate support and intervention for those with additional needs; and
- for the leader, EYS and management group to work together to produce a well focused development plan to guide the continuous work of the centre.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school is now good. The pre-school 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 centre has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

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