

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Carryduff Pre-School
Playgroup, Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in February 2013

CONTENTS

Section		Page
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Inspection methods and evidence base	1
3.	Overall finding of the inspection	1
4.	Children's achievements	1
5.	Provision for learning	2
6.	Leadership and management	3

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Carryduff Pre-School Playgroup
Address:	20a Church Road Carryduff BELFAST BT8 8DT
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	14 February 2013
Date of previous inspection:	November 2005

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	56	
in their immediate pre-school year	39	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	39	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	4	
with a statement of special educational needs	0	
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	4	
with English as an additional language	1	
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	
Attendance:		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	82.5%	

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	8	0
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	7	0
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	1	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	2
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session	Number of days open in previous year
2½ hours	2½ hours	185

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	39
Percentage returned	54%
Number of written comments:	8

1. Introduction

Carryduff Pre-School Playgroup is located in the grounds of Carryduff Primary School on Church Road. Since the last inspection in 2005, the playgroup has moved into new purpose built mobile accommodation. A new early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation took up her post in December 2012. The playgroup provides two part-time sessions which operate at the same time with different staff in each.

2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from class observations, discussions with the staff and from the scrutiny of a range of documentation provided by the playgroup.

The views of the parents, staff, and the management group were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Thirty-nine questionnaires were issued to the parents; twenty-one were returned and eight included written comments. A majority of the staff and management group returned the questionnaires. All of the questionnaires and written comments expressed high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the playgroup's work. The parents praised the staff for the professional approach to their work and their commitment to the care and well-being of the children.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

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.

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Very Good Very Good Very Good
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's achievements

The quality of the children's achievements is very good.

- The children are very well settled, engage in purposeful and productive play and show good levels of concentration and co-operation in their chosen activities.
- The children freely explore the very attractive and stimulating playroom environment and spend lengthy periods of time developing their thinking skills, imagination, language and learning.
- Very good opportunities are provided to develop the children's physical skills and as a result almost all of the children display good hand-eye co-ordination and good manipulative skills.

- Many of the children are able to make representational drawings and paintings and these are mounted in colourful displays around the playgroup.
- The children are encouraged to be independent and are developing good self-help skills as they attend to their own needs during the snack routine and help to tidy up during transition periods.
- The children are at ease with the staff and approach them readily for support in their play.

5. Provision for learning

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

- The staff have worked very hard to create a happy, caring ethos in the playgroup based on good relationships at all levels.
- All areas of the pre-school curriculum are carefully planned for and appropriately resourced to ensure variety, progression and challenge in the children's learning throughout the year.
- The quality of the interaction between all of the staff and the children is consistently of a very high standard. During the inspection, the staff readily joined in play with the children and used every opportunity to promote language and learning.
- The daily timetable is well organised to provide a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff. In addition to the regular opportunities for physical play outdoors the playgroup has access to the neighbouring school hall and resources twice a week. The staff need to review the planning for these hall sessions to ensure all time is used effectively to promote learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is very good. The staff treat the children with care and respect and provide a secure, supportive environment that helps the children to grow in confidence and to develop their consideration for the needs and wishes of others.
- The written planning is comprehensive and outlines clearly the learning inherent in the activities. The staff use the planning to guide them in their work with the children and adopt a flexible approach that allows them to take account of the children's differing needs and interests.
- The staff are currently reviewing the methods of observation and record keeping and the inspection would confirm this as an appropriate priority. While the staff know the children very well there is insufficient written evidence across all the curricular areas to build up an accurate account of the children's progress and development. In addition, a small number of the methods adopted are too narrowly focused on testing.
- Good provision is made for the children with special educational needs. The children identified as having special needs are well integrated into the activities provided. The staff make very good efforts to identify, address and monitor the particular problems faced by these children

6. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is very good

- The leaders in both playrooms work closely with the centre manager to promote a team approach to the work. All of the staff are hard-working and committed to the care and well-being of the children and all contribute to the high quality of the provision. The staff are reflective practitioners and as a result the process of self-evaluation is well embedded.
- The children transfer to a number of different primary schools and relevant information about the children's progress is passed on to each of the primary schools to which the children transfer. There is very close liaison with the neighbouring primary school to ensure that the children who will be attending in year 1 make a smooth transition.
- At the time of the inspection the playgroup's new early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation had been in post for a very short period. While she has outlined appropriate areas for further development, it will be important that the staff work with the early years specialist to address the areas for improvement identified in the report.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

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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