

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Holy Child Nursery School,  
Belfast

Report of an Inspection  
in January 2011

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION HOLY CHILD NURSERY SCHOOL, BELFAST

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>
Attending full-time	26	26
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	1
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0	1
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	3	6
With English as an additional language	1	0

\* On 1 July.

\*\* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of special educational needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	48%
Average attendance for the previous year.	86%

### 2. Duration of Sessions

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
4½ hours	-	-

### 3. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants	2	0
Qualified Nursery Assistants	0	0

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	2
Trainees	0

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

### 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	52
Percentage returned	59.6%
Number of written comments	15

**HOLY CHILD NURSERY SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT11 8JP (113-6316)**  
**INSPECTED: 19 JANUARY 2011**

1. Holy Child Nursery School is situated in the Andersonstown area of west Belfast. Since the last inspection in 2004, a new assistant teacher has been appointed and took up post in 2008. The children who attend come from a wide catchment area. The nursery operates two full-time classes of children who are all in their immediate pre-school year.

2. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The nursery school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

**CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS**

3. The children settle to their play activities with concentration and complete tasks with perseverance. They demonstrate very high levels of confidence and independence as they make choices and decisions. Most of the children can play imaginatively and co-operatively together, they are very well motivated and clearly enjoy their learning. The children show an understanding of the needs of others and can express their emotions; their behaviour is excellent. The children who have been identified as having additional needs are well integrated and are making good progress.

4. The children engage in a wide range of creative activities; their art work is well developed with many children creating detailed representational work. Many of the children show an interest in and understanding of simple mathematical concepts and language as they count, make comparisons, investigate capacity and make patterns during their play. The children show curiosity and interest as they investigate the natural world through relevant themes and activities both indoors and outdoors.

5. The children are making good progress in developing their oral language skills and they all listen carefully to instructions and during whole group story sessions. Effective use is made of incorporating the children's own comments as captions on much of their art work. Many of the children engage in a range of mark making and a significant minority are beginning to demonstrate emergent writing skills. The promotion of story sacks, a lending library and relevant classes all foster a culture of partnership with the parents in developing their children's interest in books and language and communication skills.

**THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING**

6. All of the space within the nursery and the nursery grounds are used effectively to create stimulating and richly resourced areas for play. The thoughtful layout of resources and good use of natural and real items promotes effectively the children's independence and high levels of engagement. The nursery is enhanced by creative displays of the children's own art work.

7. The staff all demonstrate a high level of professional expertise as they interact with the children during play, group sessions and the daily routines. They have appropriately high expectations of the children promoting good behaviour and respect for one another and their environment. The staff listen to the children and build very effectively on their ideas to extend their language and learning.

8. The planning provides detailed guidance for day-to-day work and is implemented consistently by the staff. The broad and balanced pre-school programme is well matched to the children's stage of development and the recent attention on identifying targeted support for specific children is having a positive impact on their progress. There are very good to

excellent opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Particular strengths observed on the day of the inspection included, the effective use of themes and materials which particularly motivated the boy's interests and the imaginative role-play, creative art work and interest in mark making by all of the children.

9. There are very good links with the parents, local schools and a range of agencies and support services. The views of parents are valued; they are strongly encouraged to be involved in their child's education through the provision of a wide a range of relevant information and classes. The parents are kept fully informed about their child's progress and development.

10. The quality of pastoral care within this school is outstanding. The strengths include the positive and inclusive ethos, the very comprehensive policies and the excellent relationships and care provided for the children by the whole staff team.

11. The nursery has very good arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

12. The nursery gives very good attention to promoting the children's health and well-being, including opportunities for a healthy break, dental hygiene and a range of physical activities.

13. The Principal provides excellent leadership and management of the nursery school; she is an excellent role-model in her own work with the children and parents. She sets a positive and enthusiastic tone fostering a strong team approach in which all staff are valued and motivated in their ongoing professional development. The school development planning process is based on meaningful consultation and reflection leading to continuous and systematic improvements in the provision.

**14. The key strengths in this nursery school include:**

- the excellent ethos;
- the very high levels of care, support and skill provided by the staff effectively promoting the children's learning and development;
- the very good to outstanding opportunities to learn in all areas of the pre-school curriculum and the very good progress being made by the children;
- the very effective links with the parents and other agencies;
- the close attention paid to meeting the needs of individual children, including those with additional educational needs; and
- the excellent leadership and management provided by the Principal.

15. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The nursery school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

**QUESTIONNAIRES**

- The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the staff and the Board of Governors (governors) to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Almost 60% of the parents responded to the questionnaire; nine parents availed of the opportunity to speak to members of the inspection team and in addition there were 15 written comments. The responses from the parents, staff and governors all indicated a very high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the educational and pastoral provision within the nursery school. The responses referred, for example, to the excellent levels of care and support for individual children's needs, the varied and interesting programme, the excellent support and guidance provided for parents and the caring and professional staff.

**© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2011**

**This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.**

**Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)**

