

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Holy Trinity Pre-School Centre,
Enniskillen

Report of an Inspection
in January 2012

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Holy Trinity Pre-School Centre
Address:	Derrin Road Cornagrade ENNISKILLEN Co Fermanagh BT74 6AZ
Management Type:	Voluntary
Date of inspection:	19 January 2012
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	Mill St Unit am session	Cornagrade Unit am session
• attending the pre-school centre	18	16
• in their immediate pre-school year	18	16
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	18	15
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	***	***
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	0
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	0
• with English as an additional language	***	***
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	0
Attendance:		
• attendance*** of funded children for the previous school year	N/A	N/A

* Special Educational Needs

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

*** Redacted Figure 5 or fewer

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	6
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	5
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	3

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
3 hours	-	188

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	34
Percentage returned:	74%
Number of written comments:	15

HOLY TRINITY PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE, ENNISKILLEN, CO FERMANAGH, BT74 6AZ (2BB-0589)

1. Holy Trinity Pre-School Centre is comprised of two units, each accommodated in two mobile classrooms located on the split-site campus for Holy Trinity Primary and Nursery School, Enniskillen. One unit is located on the grounds of the Mill Street campus and the other unit is located at Cornagrade, Enniskillen. The centre entered the Pre-School Expansion Programme in September 2010 due to under-provision of pre-school places in the Enniskillen area. Historically, Holy Trinity Nursery School, located at the Cornagrade site, provides two full-time sessions and is oversubscribed with pre-school applications. For the past eleven years, the primary school has operated, a private parish-funded pre-school provision to serve the needs of the community. All the children come from the local town area of Enniskillen. The funding of the 33 new places was in response to the recent under-provision in the Enniskillen area for this year 2011-2012. The provision is reviewed and allocated on a year-by-year basis. At the time of the inspection, there was no confirmed allocation of places for next year.

2. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school is very good. The pre-school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

3. The children's behaviour is exemplary. There is a caring and welcoming ethos wherein all the children are valued and respected. On arrival, the children settle quickly to their freely chosen activities and many of them demonstrate very good levels of engagement, concentration and perseverance. Almost all of the children can play collaboratively and are familiar with and responsive to the staff expectations for transitions from activities throughout the session. The children have very good turn-taking skills and some firm friendships are developing among them. They display self-management skills to access resources, to construct models and to care for the environment.

4. During the inspection, the children were able to make choices, to ask questions, select materials and to problem-solve using the range of activities and interesting resources. The children enjoy listening to stories and engage according to their stage of language development in discussion about them; a majority of the children speak with fluency and clarity. A significant number of children also enjoy browsing through books independently in the book corner. The staff are continuing to access training to improve further the quality of the children's language skills. The children experiment with representational drawing and early mark-making through play and are effectively developing their pre-writing skills.

THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING

5. The staff have worked hard in a short space of time to create an attractive indoor and outdoor learning environment for the children. The accommodation at both sites is satisfactory and the staff utilise it well to make best use of all the space in order to define a broad range of areas for play. The outdoor areas are newly-developed and thoughtfully presented to encourage some energetic play and gardening activities. The daily timetable is well-organised to provide a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff. The snack-time routine is organised informally and provides very good opportunities for the children to develop mathematical concepts, independence, and social and conversational skills. After the session, the children stay in their playrooms to have a packed lunch or school dinner and the staff encourage the children to learn from the experience of enjoying conversation and sharing during a meal.

6. The quality of the staff interactions with the children is a key strength of the centre. The children are happy to talk to the staff and often turn to them for support during play. The staff use the opportunities for learning effectively and demonstrate very good questioning techniques to sustain the children's language and understanding. The staff are competent in understanding when to become involved in extending the children's play. During the inspection, they effectively facilitated play that reached a satisfying conclusion for the children.

7. The staff have made a very good start to the development of the written planning for play and are developing action-plans to improve further the provision for outdoor play. The provision of themes helps to support progression in the activities and the resources. The staff evaluations of the daily sessions indicate that they make daily adjustments to the planning in response to the specific needs and interests of the children. The assessment records for the children are at an early stage in terms of recording the evidence for children's all-round progress and development. The staff use their observations of the children well to identify early any additional learning or behavioural needs that the children may have and carefully monitor their progress; however, this needs to be extended to record the children's progress and development in all areas of the pre-school curriculum, especially language and mathematics. It is timely that the staff are receiving training to develop their recording of evidence related to the children's progress and development.

8. The centre's educational programme offers good to outstanding opportunities for learning in all of the areas of the pre-school curriculum. The points which follow illustrate specific aspects of the programme.

- Careful attention is given to promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development. The staff have consistent approaches to positive behaviour management. The children are able to make independent choices and can access the resources they need to develop their play. The staff value the children's individuality and ideas; they know the children well.
- The staff provide a language-rich environment and are continuing to develop their knowledge of the children's varying levels of language acquisition.
- The staff make excellent use of all opportunities to promote mathematical language and to develop the children's early concepts about time, one-to-one correspondence, shape and measures.
- The staff use themes and topics to develop the children's understanding of the world around us. There are many photographs of the children enjoying visits to local places of interest. Visitors to the playrooms are enhancing the children's understanding of the people who help in the local community. During the inspection, the children enjoyed small world and role play activities to develop their understanding of the world around them, including the influences of the weather on the types of foods cooked in the home.
- The children are confident in the creation of their own models and paint pictures, often representing their feelings and ideas. The art work is displayed attractively around the playrooms.

- There are good opportunities and resources provided for the children to develop their manipulative skills. The staff have recently improved the outdoor areas and need to continue to assess and develop further the activities to match the children's varying levels of physical skills.

9. The centre has developed good links with the parents and provides information about the children's settling-in period. It has an informal and effective approach to meeting with the parents to share information, advice and guidance to help the children learn. The centre uses a text service and a monthly newsletter to inform parents about events in the centre and visits to places of interest. Good use is made of visitors to the centre and educational trips to enhance the children's educational experiences. The centre has excellent links with the primary school and nursery school.

10. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the centre is outstanding. This is evidenced through the happy children, the welcoming ethos and the very good working relationships at all levels. The staff demonstrate a strong commitment to both the care and well-being of the children.

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

12. The centre gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity; for example, through the provision of a healthy snack and encouraging the children to eat a healthy lunch. When the weather permits the children are encouraged to develop energetic play in the outdoors areas.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

13. The two pre-school leaders are enthusiastic, highly motivated and they provide good leadership for the staff. They are well-supported by the hardworking staff. They work well together and have established consistent approaches to the implementation of policies and methods for planning and assessment. Each is committed to their continuing professional development and effectively promote a strong sense of teamwork. They are willing to seek advice from the head of the nursery and are very well-supported at the two sites by the primary school Principal and senior management team.

14. The staff has made a useful start to self-evaluation through the development of action-plans which target appropriate areas for improvement. They are committed to improving further the provision in the centre. The early year's specialist from the Early Years Organisation has made an outstanding contribution to the overall development of the provision in a short period of time. The support provided is well-focused and matches effectively the needs of the centre. There is a difficulty in planning for the future because the centre exists on a short-term basis.

15. The key strengths of the centre include:

- the caring and welcoming ethos wherein all the children are valued and respected;
- the provision of a broad and balanced pre-school experience that motivates and stimulates the children to settle quickly to learn and concentrate for sustained periods;

- the skilful interactions of the staff in effectively developing the children's thinking and learning;
- the very good organisation of the day and the effective use of the routines and the transitions to promote the children's choice, confidence, independence and social skills;
- the good to outstanding opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum, in particular, 'the world around us';
- the outstanding support, advice and guidance provided by the early years specialist and the Principal and senior management team of the primary and nursery school; and
- the effective leadership, and the team spirit among the hard-working and dedicated pre-school staff.

16. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school is very good. The pre-school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children and 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 and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Seventy-four percent of the parents responded to the questionnaire and of these 60% made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire were very positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction with nearly all aspects of the centre's work. In particular the parents appreciated the approachable, professional and caring staff in ensuring their children learn in a safe and secure environment. The responses from the management group and the staff were also very positive. The key messages from all of the responses, and the very few concerns raised, have been shared with the staff and management of the pre-school centre.

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