

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Hollywood Nursery School,  
Co Down

Report of an Inspection  
in May 2011

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON HOLYWOOD NURSERY SCHOOL, CO DOWN  
(411-0030)**

**1. Details of Children**

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

\* 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.	4%
Average attendance for the previous year.	95%

**2. Duration of Sessions**

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
-	2½ hours	2½ hours

**3. Details of Staff**

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>
Teachers	1	0
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	1	2 + 1 (Special Needs)
Nursery Assistants (non-qualified)	0	0

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

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

**4. Parental Questionnaires**

Number issued	49
Percentage returned	59.2%
Number of written comments	15

**HOLYWOOD NURSERY SCHOOL, CO DOWN, BT18 9BU (411-0030)**  
**INSPECTED: 18 MAY 2011**

1. Hollywood Nursery School is situated in the centre of the town. The vast majority of the children come from the immediate area. The nursery school provides two sessions daily with 52 children attending on a part-time basis.

2. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is very good. The nursery 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 are well-settled, highly motivated and happy to talk about their learning activities. They make creative use of the learning resources; they access and store the resources independently, demonstrating a growing sense of responsibility for the learning environment. The children play together co-operatively, taking increasing account of the needs and interests of others. During the inspection, there were many examples of sustained purposeful play.

4. There are very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum; the development of the children's language and communication skills and of their understanding of early mathematical concepts are particular strengths of the nursery school's provision. The staff makes effective use of incidental conversation to extend the children's vocabulary. Captions, labels and visual instructions are used very effectively to record the children's learning experiences and to promote the development of their early reading skills. The children browse frequently in the book area and the adults read stories at the children's request; the children listen attentively during group story time. The availability of an appropriate range of writing tools and materials, both indoors and outdoors, provides the children with very good opportunities to develop their experimental writing skills.

5. The children are gaining a very good understanding of the early mathematical concepts. During the inspection, the staff used appropriate mathematical language when participating in the children's play and promoted the children's understanding of size, shape, weight, capacity and positional language.

**THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING**

6. The atmosphere in the centre is characterised by a sense of enjoyment and productivity; most of the play areas have been skilfully developed to capture the children's interests and to foster their creativity and imagination. The warm, respectful atmosphere promotes the children's self-esteem and helps them develop the confidence to try new experiences; the daily session is well organised with effective, purposeful use of all the time available for learning. It will be important, however, when the weather is not too inclement, for the staff to ensure that children are able to avail of daily opportunities for a period of outdoor play.

7. The adult interactions with the children are consistently of a good quality; the staff engage meaningfully in the play activities; they value the children's opinions and build effectively on their ideas; they make very effective use of the small group sessions to consolidate and extend the children's learning.

8. A wide range of themes and topics is incorporated skilfully to develop a good variety of stimulating activities and learning experiences for the children in nearly all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff are making increasing use of their observations to assess the children's progress, to identify their individual needs and to inform their interactions with them. It will be important the staff raise their expectations in relation to the most able children and provide more appropriately challenging activities matched to their abilities and needs.

9. There are very good links with the parents. They are kept informed about events within the centre through the parents' information board and an informative newsletter; they receive information about their child's progress through informal meetings and through two written reports per year.

10. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the nursery school is very good. This is evidenced through the staff's ongoing response to the children's interests and needs, the promotion of safe play in the wider environment and the excellent working relationships at all levels.

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

12. The nursery school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, through the provision of a healthy snack and opportunities to play outdoors, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

13. The Principal is well-organised, enthusiastic and committed to the ongoing development of the nursery school for the children and the community. Her effective leadership and management is underpinned by good teamwork and the excellent contribution made by the assistants.

14. Since the last inspection in 2003, reflection and self-evaluation to promote improvement have become key integral elements of the staff's practice. In doing so, they have successfully enhanced the learning experiences for all the children attending the nursery school. The nursery school development plan (SDP) identifies appropriate priorities for development over the current three year period.

### **15. The key strengths of the nursery school include:**

- the high levels of motivation, engagement and enjoyment of learning displayed by the children;
- the consistently good quality of the adult interactions observed;
- the successful use of all routines to develop the children's independence;
- the effective leadership provided by the Principal; and
- the reflective and collaborative approach of the nursery school staff and their commitment to continuous improvement in the interest of the children.

16. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is very good. The nursery 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, the staff and the management group to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Twenty-nine of the parents (59.2%) responded to the questionnaire and fifteen made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire were wholly positive and indicated a very high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the nursery school's work; in particular the parents expressed their appreciation of the effective leadership of the Principal, the helpful, caring staff and of the stimulating learning environment. The responses from the management group and the staff questionnaires were also very positive. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and management of the nursery school.

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