

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Jolly Jesters Day Nursery
Playgroup, Dromore

Report of an Inspection
in November 2010

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Jolly Jesters Day Nursery Playgroup
Address:	13 Castle Street DROMORE Co Down BT25 1AF
Management Type:	Private

Date of inspection:	25 November 2010
Date of previous inspection:	3 November 2004

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	27	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	20	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	20	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	0	-
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	-
• with English as an additional language	0	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	1	-
Attendance:		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	90%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	4	0
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	4	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	2	0

Number of: **	
Students	0
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:	20
Percentage returned:	45%
Number of written comments:	3

JOLLY JESTERS DAY NURSERY PLAYGROUP, DROMORE, CO DOWN, BT25 1AF (5CA-0195)

1. Jolly Jesters Day Nursery Playgroup is situated in the centre of Dromore, Co Down. Since the last inspection in 2004, a new leader and assistant have been appointed; they took up position in September 2010.

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

CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

3. There is a very settled, caring atmosphere in the playgroup. The children respond positively to the staff's high expectations and display exemplary behaviour; they are eager to explore new learning and make full use of the stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments. They are learning to share, take turns, follow and lead in the play activities and to persevere with tasks. The children clearly enjoy the excellent opportunities for learning provided across all areas of the curriculum and often engage in concentrated and productive play. The children's own art work is celebrated through attractive displays around the playrooms.

4. The staff have worked hard to create a language rich environment which promotes effectively the children's language development. Themed books enhance areas of play and the children frequently browse through these. In addition to the large group story session, there are regular opportunities for informal story, rhyme and music sessions with individuals and small groups. The majority of the children can talk about their experiences and express their thoughts and ideas with confidence and fluency.

THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING

5. The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is outstanding and every opportunity is used by the adults to promote language and learning. The staff often engage the children in purposeful discussions and develop their language through skilful questioning. The thoughtful organisation of the daily timetable provides lengthy periods of free play; the necessary routines such as snack and tidy up time promote independence and confidence.

6. The staff have developed an appropriate method of planning which outlines variety, challenge and progression in the programme. Reflective evaluations are based on the children's responses and are used to inform future learning. The staff know the children very well, they operate a key worker system to assist them in the monitoring and recording of their progress and development; this information is shared with the parents throughout the year.

7. The parents are each encouraged to become involved in the education of their child and the life of the centre through a variety of ways, such as regular meetings, newsletters, a parent's booklet, volunteering and fun days. Very good links have been established with the local nursery school, and primary school in which some of the children will be enrolled.

8. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is outstanding. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to guide the staff in this aspect of their work.

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

10. The playgroup gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. A substantial investment has been made in developing the outdoor play area, and the children clearly enjoy the wide range of activities and experiences on offer.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

11. The management structure within the playgroup promotes a good team-spirit. The recently appointed leader is very well supported by the playgroup manager, who has a clear vision for the future development of the playgroup. The leader is enthusiastic and a good role-model for the staff. All of the staff contribute to the well-being of the children and the overall effectiveness of the playgroup.

12. The process of self-evaluation is well embedded and there is evidence that it has led to improvements in the quality of the provision. A thoughtful three-year development plan, which includes appropriate action plans, ensures that priorities and targets for future development are identified. The early year's specialist, from the Early Year's Organisation, provides very good advice and support to the staff.

13. The key strengths of the playgroup include:

- the caring ethos and the exemplary behaviour of the children who display a very positive attitude to their learning and demonstrate very good talking and listening skills;
- the breadth, balance, challenge and progression provided in all areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- the outstanding quality of the interaction between the staff and the children;
- the very good links established with the parents and the local schools;
- the appropriate methods of planning and assessment; and
- the quality of the leadership and management and the commitment of all the staff to providing high quality provision.

14. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The playgroup 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. Nine of the parents responded to the questionnaire and three 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. 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 the proprietors of the pre-school centre.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The main doors leading to the playroom need to be secured and access to the boiler house in the garage should be reviewed.

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