

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Loughbrickland Pre-School,
Banbridge

Report of an Inspection
in January 2011

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Loughbrickland Pre-School
Address:	Aghaderg Road Loughbrickland BANBRIDGE Co Down BT32 4LA
Management Type:	Private

Date of inspection:	20 January 2011
Date of previous inspection:	14 October 2002

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	26	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	26	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	26	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	-
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	-
• with English as an additional language	0	-
• 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	88%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	4
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	4
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	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:	26
Percentage returned:	65%
Number of written comments:	10

LOUGHRICKLAND PRE-SCHOOL, BANBRIDGE, CO DOWN, BT32 4LA (5AA-0421)

1. Loughbrickland Pre-School is accommodated within a stone-built church hall which is situated on the Aghaderg Road, Loughbrickland. Since the last inspection in 2002, one new member of staff has been appointed and the early years specialist (EYS) from the Early Years Organisation (EYO) has changed three times.

2. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is good. The centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the centre has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) will monitor the centre's progress on the area for improvement.

ACHIEVEMENTS

3. The children are very well behaved. They settle quickly to their chosen learning activities and demonstrate good levels of engagement, concentration and perseverance. They are developing good turn-taking and self-management skills and a few of them are beginning to work together collaboratively.

4. Most of the children are keen to talk about their play; they listen attentively to the adults and to each other and are confident to both ask and respond to questions. They enjoy stories and rhymes and a few of them are beginning to browse and enjoy books independently. They use signs and symbols effectively to follow the playroom routines and a significant number of them can recognise their own name. The staff need to provide opportunities for the children to integrate mark-making naturally into their play activities and to ensure that they make progress in labelling their work independently. Three members of staff have successfully completed the ELKLAN language programme; they have identified early a number of children who are experiencing speech and language difficulties and have assisted parents in accessing appropriate support for them.

THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING

5. There is a warm, welcoming ethos within the centre. There is a good balance between free-play and adult directed activities. The snack routine is used effectively to promote the children's social and personal skills; it will be important for the staff to consider how this time could be exploited further to support the children's learning across the curriculum. There are good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum and very good opportunities for the children to explore and develop their understanding of the world around them. The quality of the adult interactions with the children is consistently good. The staff know the children well and engage with them effectively in discussion about their families and interests. However, during the inspection, the adults often missed opportunities to build on the children's ideas and to extend their language, particularly in relation to early mathematics.

6. The written planning focuses effectively on ensuring progression in the children's learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff make good use of their observations to identify the children's interests, achievements and stage of development; this good practice should be developed further in order to inform their planning and to guide their day-to-day work, particularly with the more able children.

7. The staff have developed very good links with the parents. The parents are kept well-informed about the life and work of the centre through a pre-enrolment information booklet, 'what we did today' posters and informative monthly newsletters. Throughout the year the parents are kept informed about their child's development through three progress meetings with the staff accompanied by three written reports. As part of the centre's self-evaluation strategies, the parents are encouraged to express their views on the centre's provision through the 'Praise and Grumbles' box and through an end of year questionnaire. The inspection team recommend that this questionnaire be issued at an earlier stage in the year to enable the staff to respond to the needs of the current cohort of parents. The centre has good pastoral links with the schools to which the children transfer. They have appropriately identified the need to develop these links further in order to ensure progression in the children's learning.

8. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the centre is very good. This is evidenced through the very good working relationships at all levels and by the staff's very good use of praise to promote the children's confidence, self-esteem and good behaviour.

9. The centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department. There is a need for the child protection flowchart and the arrangements for the children's intimate care to be included in the child protection policy.

10. The centre gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, through the healthy snack and the regular opportunities for energetic play which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

11. The centre is very well managed and organised. The leader has a clear vision for the development of the centre and is effective in accessing appropriate training for the staff in order to realise that vision. The staff have a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities and they work very well together as a team.

12. There are very good structures in place for self-evaluation to promote improvement. The outcomes are used effectively to identify the centre's strengths and areas for development and to inform the development plan. There is evidence that the recent consultations with parents have led to an improvement in the quality of information provided to parents about their children's progress.

13. In the past year the EYS has made a very good contribution to the overall development of this pre-school centre. However, prior to that, the centre had a period of one year when they did not receive any support from the EYO; the EYS from the EYO has also changed three times during the last eight years.

14. **The key strengths of the centre include:**

- the confident, well-behaved children;
- the welcoming environment and the very good relationships at all levels;
- the good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- the consistently good level of adult interactions with the children;

- the very good structures for self-evaluation to promote improvement; and
- the effective leader and hard-working staff.

15. **The areas for improvement include the need:**

- to develop further the use of observations and assessment to guide the staff in their day-to-day work, particularly with the more able children.

16. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is good. The centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the centre has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the centre's progress on the area for improvement.

APPENDIX

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. Seventeen of the parents (65%) responded to the questionnaire and ten made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire indicated a high level of satisfaction with nearly all aspects of the centre's provision. In particular the parents expressed their appreciation of the caring, approachable staff and the wide range of learning activities provided for the children. The responses from the staff questionnaires were wholly positive of the work of the centre. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and Proprietor of the pre-school centre.

© 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

