

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Mini-Model Day Nursery,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in October 2012

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In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Mini-Model Day Nursery
Address:	Belfast Model School for Girls 35 Dunowen Gardens BELFAST BT14 6NQ
Management Type:	Belfast Board Service

Date of inspection:	3 October 2012
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	13	-
in their immediate pre-school year	9	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	9	-
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	0	-
with English as an additional language	2	-
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	90.37%	-

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	2	0
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	2	0
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	1	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
2½ hours	-	198

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	8
Percentage returned	25%
Number of written comments:	0

1. Introduction

Mini-Model Day Nursery pre-school setting is part of a purpose built day-care facility accommodated in the Girls' Model School in North Belfast. This is part of a Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) service which provides a range of services within the community including placements and training for students and trainees studying childcare and education.

The pre-school is in its second year of receiving funding as part of the Department of Education's Pre-school Programme. Although the majority of the children are in their pre-school year, the remainder will return for an additional year. At the time of the inspection, the day-care manager was on a period of extended leave; another member of the day-care staff was acting up in this role.

2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations, discussions with the staff and from a range of documentation provided by the pre-school setting.

The views of the parents and staff were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. The small number of questionnaires returned from parents and staff were very positive about all aspects of the provision.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

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

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Good Good Satisfactory
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's achievements

The quality of the children's achievements is good.

- The children are very well settled and demonstrate high levels of independence and sustained play as they engage in the full range of activities provided.
- Almost all of the children play collaboratively and with imagination as they take on roles, share equipment and investigate materials in their play. The small number of children who are less confident to participate are well supported by the staff and there is evidence that they are making appropriate progress.

- Almost all of the children talk freely about their experiences with each other and to the staff; they all listen attentively during enjoyable group stories and join in the songs and rhymes.
- The children enjoy making simple models with the construction toys but are more limited in their use of the creative art materials; they need more encouragement to explore these materials and express their own ideas.

5. **Provision for learning**

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

- A key strength in the provision is the skill of the staff within the pre-school room. They are sensitive to the needs of the children and are very effective in establishing the daily routines, promoting their independence and their social skills. During the inspection, there were many good examples when the staff extended the children's language and thinking.
- The staff create a stimulating and attractive learning environment within the playroom. They make effective use of the space available to provide a broad range of activities to support learning in all aspects of the pre-school curriculum. The addition of photographs, natural and real items enhanced the children's interest significantly. The staff need to improve the children's access to books and encourage their use throughout the session.
- The staff work hard to make effective use of all space and visits to places of interest within the community to provide a range of appropriate experiences for physical and outdoor play. On the day of the inspection, the children enjoyed circle games and used small equipment with confidence. The staff recognise the need to plan more fully for the use of these facilities to ensure the opportunities for learning are maximised.
- The staff know the children well and the room leader has made good progress in developing a broad and balanced pre-school programme. The staff at all levels recognise that overall the planning and assessment processes are at an early stage of development and have identified this as a priority within their action plans. The absence of sufficient guidance and support has impeded the rate of progress in this important area.
- The staff encourage parents to keep informed about their children's progress the work of the setting through planned meetings and an informative, monthly newsletter. The staff and the management recognise the need for the links with the schools to which the children will transfer and other organisations, such as Sure Start, need to be strengthened further.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the pre-school are very good. The staff create a safe, warm and nurturing environment based on excellent relationships between the children and the staff. They give very good attention to the emotional and social development of the children.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the pre-school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.
- The pre-school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity to encourage a healthy lifestyle.

6. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- The pre-school room staff work well as a team, they are clear about their roles and support each other well during the session. The pre-school supervisor provides good leadership within the room.
- The inspection confirmed the acknowledged areas for improvement in the wider leadership and management of the pre-school setting which have impeded the development of aspects of the provision. In particular, there is a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities within the management structure, insufficient monitoring and evaluation of the practice, poor lines of communication and a lack of specific time for the staff to plan together. There has been inadequate support from the independent early year's specialist (EYS). A new EYS, from the Early Years Organisation, has recently been appointed.
- The processes for self-evaluation and continuous improvement are at a very early stage. The action plans need to be updated to indicate more clearly how the areas identified during this inspection will be addressed. The newly appointed EYS needs to work closely with both the staff and the management group to bring about further improvement.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided this pre-school setting is good. The pre-school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the pre-school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the pre-school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

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