

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Pond Park Nursery School,  
Lisburn

Report of an Inspection  
in February 2012

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON POND PARK NURSERY SCHOOL, LISBURN

### 1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	0
Attending part-time	0	52
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	3
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	3	1
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	2	0
With English as an additional language	1	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.	25.64%
Average attendance for the previous year.	94%

### 2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4½ hours	2½ hours	2½ hours

### 3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants	0	0
Qualified Nursery Assistants	2	2

Number of: ***	
Students	12
Trainees	0

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

### 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	78
Percentage returned	67.95%
Number of written comments	39

**POND PARK NURSERY SCHOOL, LISBURN, CO ANTRIM, BT28 3PW (411-6418)**  
**INSPECTED: 28 FEBRUARY 2012**

1. Pond Park Nursery School is situated in purpose-built nursery accommodation in Redpoll Avenue, Pond Park Road, Lisburn. Almost all of the children attending the nursery school come from the local area. The nursery school operates daily one full-time class and two part-time classes. Since the last inspection in April 2005, a new principal has been appointed.

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

#### **CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS**

3. The children are well settled and display very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Almost all of the children play collaboratively and independently for sustained periods. They make independent choices, display a keen interest in the activities and listen attentively during group sessions. Most of the children play imaginatively during the very good role-play opportunities. Most of the children are gaining a very good understanding of the early mathematical concepts and developing their skills of reasoning and logic through the construction and scientific play activities provided.

4. Almost all of the children engage readily with the staff and their peers and join in group discussions. During the inspection, many of the children accessed the very good range of fiction and non-fiction books incorporated throughout each play area. Many of the children show interest in early writing skills and make very good use of the wide range of resources available in the discrete areas and within other areas of play, for example, the bakery shop.

#### **PROVISION FOR LEARNING**

5. The high quality of the play resources and the layout of the play areas, both indoors and outdoors, ensure that the children experience outstanding opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The children access daily the large outdoor space for energetic physical play and a wide range of exciting interest areas which encourage the children to investigate and share their discoveries.

6. The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently of a very good standard and, on occasions, outstanding. The staff develop the children's understanding of their play through talking to them about their ideas, personal experiences and achievements. They extend the children's language, thinking skills and problem solving skills. The daily routines, such as snack and lunch time, are incorporated unobtrusively into the daily timetable and develop the children's high levels of independence.

7. The staff use their observations and assessments of the children's development to link effectively the planned activities and learning experiences to the children's individual interests and learning needs. The staff use effective approaches when working with children with additional learning needs. These children integrate fully into the play sessions and make good progress.

8. The planning contains appropriate themes and the staff use effectively the evaluations of the children's responses to the activities to determine their future planning and to inform parents about their child's progress.

9. The nursery school staff are fully committed to working in partnership with the parents through the sharing of curricular information, for example, newsletters, regular interviews wherein the children's progress is reviewed, the provision of parental workshops and visits to the playrooms focusing on their children's play. The parents contribute successfully to the nursery's self-evaluation process through the completion of questionnaires regarding their children's pastoral and learning experiences. The staff have developed a successful cross-community link with a local nursery school that focuses on shared learning experiences for the children and the staff.

10. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the nursery school is outstanding. Among the significant strengths of the provision are the welcoming and child-friendly environments for the children and the parents, the celebration of the children's work and progress, the mutual respect for one another and the value placed on the children's views.

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

12. The nursery school gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity; for example, the children have healthy daily snacks and they have outstanding opportunities to play outdoors where they experience a varied and progressive range of physical activities.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

13. The Principal provides outstanding leadership of the nursery school. She is an outstanding practitioner and is highly committed to providing quality nursery school education for the children and families of the community. The staff are a dedicated and highly skilled team. The established culture of reflection and review is evident throughout their practice; this is also exemplified in the comprehensive development plan and associated action plans that identify a cycle of continuous improvement which benefits the children's learning experiences.

14. The key strengths in this nursery school include:

- the settled , well-motivated and well-behaved children;
- the inclusive ethos which develops the children's confidence and fosters positive attitudes and dispositions to their learning;
- the broad and balanced play programme that provides outstanding opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- the very good and outstanding quality of the staff interaction in developing the children's learning;
- the outstanding leadership provided by the Principal and the professional skill and expertise of the highly effective staff team; and
- the very good links with the parents, including the development of the cross-community links.

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

### THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS AND SUPPORT STAFF

The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the governors and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. A majority (approximately 68%) of the parents responded to the questionnaire and 39 made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire indicated that almost all the parents regard the nursery very highly and that they appreciate:

- the caring staff who are clearly focused on the well-being of the children and their family;
- the children's achievements and the development of their social confidence and the wide range of skills they are learning through the provision of an outstanding pre-school programme; and
- the high quality of the learning environment both indoors and outdoors.

There were ten responses from the governors and 9 contained additional written comments. Six responses were received from the staff, teaching and support, and all six made written comments. All of the responses from the governors and the staff were wholly positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the nursery school and the quality of the learning and teaching. They also emphasised the outstanding quality of the Principal's leadership and the development of the whole team spirit and appropriate staff development programme. The key messages from all of the responses were shared with the staff and the governors of the nursery school.

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