

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Rascals Playstation Community  
Playgroup, Ballinamallard,  
Enniskillen

Report of an Inspection  
in March 2011

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Name of pre-school centre:</b> | Rascals Playstation Community Playgroup  |
| <b>Address:</b>                   | 20 Enniskillen Road<br>Ballinamallard<br>ENNISKILLEN<br>Co Fermanagh<br>BT94 2ER |
| <b>Management Type:</b>           | Voluntary  |

|                                     |                 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Date of inspection:</b>          | 14 March 2011   |
| <b>Date of previous inspection:</b> | 3 February 2003 |

### 1. Details of Children

| <b>Total number of children:</b>  | <b>am session</b> | <b>pm session</b> |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| • attending the pre-school centre   | 12                | -                 |
| • in their immediate pre-school year  | 4                 | -                 |
| • funded by Department of Education (DE)  | 4                 | -                 |
| • 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  | 0                 | -                 |
| • who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school                      | 0                 | -                 |
| <b>Attendance:</b>  |                   |                   |
| • attendance** of funded children for the previous school year  | 88%               | -                 |

\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

| <b>Number of:</b>                                 | <b>Full-time</b> | <b>Part-time</b> |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Staff, including leader                           | 0                | 2                |
| Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications | 0                | 2                |
| New appointments within previous 12 months        | 0                | 0                |

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Number of: **</b> |   |
| Students             | 0 |
| Trainees             | 0 |

\*\* Total placements since September of current year

## 3. Details of Sessions

| <b>Duration of morning session</b> | <b>Duration of afternoon session</b> | <b>Number of days open in previous year</b> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 2½ hours                           | N/A                                  | 190   |

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Number issued to parents:   | 10  |
| Percentage returned:        | 90% |
| Number of written comments: | 6   |

## **RASCALS PLAYSTATION COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, BALLINAMALLARD, ENNISKILLEN, CO FERMANAGH (2AB-0455)**

1. Rascals Playstation Community Playgroup is accommodated in a playroom in a multi-purpose community centre in the village of Ballinamallard. The children come from the surrounding rural area. The leader has been in post since the last inspection in 2003.

2. In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this playgroup is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in achievements and standards, learning and teaching, leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) will monitor and report on the playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

### **CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS**

3. The children display very good levels of concentration and interest in the wide range of activities provided in the indoor and outdoor learning environments. They respond well to the staff's expectations and learn effectively within a caring environment. During the inspection, they were often observed making choices, sharing and turn-taking and are effectively developing a range of skills including: mathematical, personal, social and emotional, and language skills.

4. The children's language development is a priority. The staff often models vocabulary and support the children to develop their listening skills, and to understand and use a broader range of language to communicate. During the inspection, the adults were observed acting as effective role-models in the imaginative play areas; they actively engaged the children in learning about the world around them and sustained interaction at a high level with the children about their play. The children's language is developing effectively as a result of the close involvement of the staff in the children's learning.

### **PROVISION FOR LEARNING**

5. The indoor and outdoor learning environment is stimulating and attractively presented with a good range of resources enhanced by authentic materials. Careful consideration is given to the effective use of all the space to create interesting areas of learning. Good use is made of the children's own art work and interest areas related to the current theme of minibeasts. The playgroup's curriculum is broad and balanced and offers good opportunities for learning in all the areas of the pre-school curriculum.

6. The quality of the staff interaction is very good and at times outstanding. The staff listens and responds to the children's ideas and effectively develops their language and thinking skills. The daily timetable is effectively organised to provide a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff to meet the wide range of needs including the children in their penultimate pre-school year. The daily snack, and other necessary routines, are organised effectively to develop the children's decision-making skills, independence, social and conversational skills.

7. The staff has worked hard to plan an effective programme to meet the needs of the small group of funded children in their pre-school year and the younger children. The staff plans activities through the use of themes and identify progression in the use of the resources; they use the information gathered in the assessment of the children's learning to plan for progression in the children's subsequent learning.

8. The parents are treated as partners in their children's education. They are appropriately involved at the beginning and end of the daily session; the staff effectively interacts with them informally in an open and welcoming manner about the children's achievements. There are good formalised procedures for communicating with the parents and sharing appropriate information about the children's progress and development.

9. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is very good. The staff treats the children with care and respect and provide a supportive environment which is helping the children to grow in confidence, independence and consideration for others.

10. The playgroup has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department. The staff needs to update the management committee child protection training and amend the child protection policy and procedures in relation to controlled access to the playroom.

11. The playgroup gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, as part of the snack routine the children are encouraged to be independent and make choices of healthy food. This provision encourages the children to adopt healthier lifestyles.

#### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

12. The playgroup has operated with fluctuations in numbers of funded children over the recent years and the management committee and the staff have worked hard to maintain the voluntary pre-school provision. The leader is a very good role-model in her work with the children and is ably-assisted by the assistant leader in the development of a broad and balanced pre-school programme. There is a need to develop further the leadership and management of the playgroup, at all levels, to ensure that the staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in the development planning process in order to effectively manage the sustainability of the pre-school provision.

13. The staff has a three year development plan and action plans to improve the provision. There is a need to develop a more collegial approach between the playgroup and the management group in the self-evaluation process in order to develop a systematic review of policies and the development plan. The early years specialist (EYS) from the Early Years Organisation has provided clear identification of areas in need of improvement and provided effective support in the development of the pre-school programme. There is a need for the management group and the staff to work closely with the EYS to address the areas identified at the time of the inspection.

#### **14. The key strengths in this playgroup include:**

- the caring, supportive learning environment and the purposeful learning experiences provided;
- the well-behaved children who are settled and concentrated in their play and learning;
- the high levels of sustained interaction between the staff and the children;
- the development of the children's learning in all areas of the pre-school programme especially the very good development of mathematical and language skills;

- the helpful and informative links with the parents to encourage parental involvement in the children's learning particularly the support for the children with language difficulties; and
- the committed, hardworking and enthusiastic staff who provide a broad and balanced pre-school programme.

**15. the areas for improvement include the need,**

- to revise the safeguarding policies and procedures in order to ensure that the controlled access to the playroom is effective throughout the daily session; and
- to develop further the leadership and management at all levels to ensure that the staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in the development planning process.

16. In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this playgroup is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in achievements and standards, learning and teaching, leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

**QUESTIONNAIRES**

The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the staff and the management committee to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Nine of the parents responded to the questionnaire and six made additional written comments. All of the comments were positive and indicate a very high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the playgroup's work; in particular the parents praised the skilful work of the staff in the arrangements for settling the children, the interest shown and the empathy, understanding and support provided for children with speech difficulties. The responses from the staff and the management committee were positive and highlight the commitment of all to the development of the playgroup. A summary of the responses has been shared with the staff and management of the playgroup.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The perimeter of the outdoor play area needs to be better secured in a few places to minimise a risk of a small child leaving the area.



**© 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](http://www.etini.gov.uk)**

