



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



Providing Inspection Services for
**Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Our Lady's Pre-School Playgroup
Belfast**

April 2008

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF OUR LADY'S PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP, BELFAST, BT14 6NN (1BB-0012)

The inspection in Our Lady's Pre-School Playgroup, Belfast highlighted strengths in the friendly staff and enjoyable group story sessions, and also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the staff's understanding of how to promote the children's language and learning through the play activities;
- the development of the planning and assessment methods;
- the opportunities for energetic play;
- the centre's policies and procedures to be updated and shared with the parents; and
- an update of the child protection training for staff.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the pre-school centre has taken place:

- new resources have been purchased using a grant from Awards For All including outdoor play equipment and storage and furniture for the home area and creative areas;
- the staff have attended some relevant training including autism and first aid;
- key policies are in the process of being reviewed and updated;
- the staff have developed a parents' booklet and have established an open day for parents; and
- a cleaner has been employed.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a series of inspection visits to the centre as part of the follow-up process. This report was compiled following the inspection visit on 3 April 2008 and also takes account of the findings of a monitoring visit in March 2008.

The following are the most important improvements brought about by the staff and the management group:

- the redecoration of the playroom and the addition and use of new equipment contribute to a more stimulating and richly resourced learning environment;
- there are improved opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum;

- there are improved opportunities for communication with and involvement of parents; and
- the staff demonstrate a more consistently skilful approach to promoting a wide range of language and learning as they engage in the play activities with the children.

The areas which need further improvement are:

- the staff should focus more clearly on the guidance given by the early years specialist as they continue to develop the planning and assessment methods to ensure that the improvements made to date are sustained and built upon;
- provide better informal opportunities to promote the pre-school children's interest in early-marking and print; and
- draw up a special educational needs policy, finalise the pastoral care policies and share them with the parents as a matter of priority.

Since the inspection, the pre-school has not evaluated effectively the progress made in the areas for improvement. The pre-school centre does not have a development plan.

The follow-up inspection findings confirm that the pre-school centre has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but some areas for improvement remain to be addressed more rigorously. The Inspectorate recommends that the processes for self-evaluation are developed and the centre draws up a development plan with associated actions as a means to bring about improvement.

The pre-school's progress in the continuing areas for improvement will be monitored by the District Inspector.

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