



*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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

Round Tower Community Playgroup Antrim

March 2010

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ROUND TOWER COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, ANTRIM, BT41 2TH (3BB-0536)

The inspection in November 2008 highlighted strengths in the caring support provided by the staff and the close working relationships that had been established with the primary school. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the quality and effectiveness of the staff's interactions in extending the children's learning; and
- the expertise of the staff in providing for those children with special educational needs.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the playgroup has taken place:

- the staff have accessed training in supporting children with special educational needs;
- the staff have visited other pre-school centres; and
- the playgroup has accessed funding to develop a new outdoor play area.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a monitoring visit in December 2009 and a follow-up inspection on 16 March 2010.

The action plan produced by the playgroup in response to the inspection findings was of a satisfactory quality and was adjusted appropriately in light of feedback given by the Inspectorate during the monitoring visit.

The playgroup does not have a development plan.

Good progress has been made in the area for improvement identified during the original inspection relating to the identification of and provision for those children with special educational needs. Satisfactory progress has been made in the area of staff interactions with the children.

The following are the most important improvements since the inspection:

- procedures in relation to the personal care of the children are now documented and shared with the parents;
- the organisation of the daily session has been reviewed and improved to provide longer periods of uninterrupted play, and more appropriate small group sessions to accommodate the wide range of stages of development within the group;
- the layout of the playroom has been improved and is helping to promote more purposeful play;
- effective links have been established with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) in Round Tower Integrated Primary School and with the local speech and language therapist;

- the staff have developed a special needs register which includes education plans for individual children, and there is evidence that the children are making progress; and
- the staff are developing a more systematic approach to assessing the children's learning.

Since the inspection, the staff have evaluated the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. The Inspectorate recommends that the processes for self-evaluation are developed further to focus more strongly on self-evaluation as a means to bring about improvement.

The playgroup now needs to draft a development plan outlining its priorities for ongoing improvement, which should continue to focus on the quality of the staff interactions, to engage and challenge the children more fully, and include planning for outdoor and physical play.

CONCLUSION

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided by this playgroup remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The playgroup has demonstrated evidence of improvement but areas for improvement in standards/learning and teaching/leadership and management remain to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met effectively.

The Inspectorate will monitor the playgroup's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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