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*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**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of an Inspection

**Aghyaran Playgroup
Castlederg**

Inspected: May 2009

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Aghyaran Community Playgroup
Address:	11 Church Road Killeter CASTLEDERG Co Tyrone BT81 7XA
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	6 May 2009
Date of previous inspection:	15 October 2002

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	12	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	6	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	6	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	6	-
• 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	-
Attendance:		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	80%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	4
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	3
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	1

Number of: **	
Students	0
Trainees	1

** 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	-	190

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	12
Percentage returned:	75%
Number of written comments:	1

**AGHYARAN COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, CASTLEDERG, CO TYRONE,
BT81 7XA (2AB-0463)**

1. Aghyaran Community Playgroup is located in the community hall near Aghyaran crossroads, outside the town of Castlederg. The children attending the pre-school centre come from the surrounding rural area. Most of the staff have remained in post since the last inspection in 2002.

2. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the management group and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Most of the parents responded to the questionnaire and one made an additional written comment. The responses from the parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision. Those who responded appreciate the approachable, friendly staff and report that they are kept well-informed about their children's progress and value the pre-school setting within the community. One management and two staff questionnaires were completed and these responses were also highly affirmative of all aspects of the work of the centre. The responses from all of the questionnaires have been taken into account as part of the inspection and were shared with the staff and the management group.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. The staff are caring and demonstrate a strong commitment to the welfare of the children and give close consideration to maintaining positive relationships within the community to support the children. The personal, social and emotional needs of the children are met very effectively by the staff.

4. The pre-school centre gives good attention to developing aspects of healthy eating and physical activity, for example, a healthy break is provided and the children have suitable opportunities for energetic play.

5. The main strengths within the pre-school centre's educational and pastoral provision are as follows.

- There is a welcoming and caring atmosphere in the pre-school centre which effectively promotes the children's self-esteem, confidence and excellent behaviour. The children are responsive to the high expectations of the staff; they learn from the secure and well-established routines.
- The daily timetable is carefully organised to provide a very good balance of free play and adult-led activities. The children are offered choices of activities and often sustain their involvement in play for lengthy periods of time.
- There are good and, at times, very good standards of learning in most of the areas of learning in the pre-school curriculum. The development of the children's language and mathematical awareness, particularly in their imaginative play, is a strength of the programme. The children often model language and learning as a result of positive interaction with the staff and are making good progress.

- The planned programme is well-developed and identifies progression in the learning throughout the year. The staff evaluate well the children's progress and use the information to report to the parents both formally and informally.
- The staff have established productive links and good communication with the parents about their children's progress and development, and encourage them to participate in educational workshops about how to support the children's learning.
- The leader and assistant along with the early years specialist (EYS) who is also the chair of the committee manage the pre-school centre very effectively. There are high levels of team-work and commitment to improvement of the provision.

6. The inspection identified areas for improvement. The following is the most important area that needs attention.

- There is a need to improve the quality of the physical play provision and to ensure that the planning for outdoor play is effectively developed.

7. The EYS has made an excellent contribution to the overall development of the provision in this pre-school centre. She works alongside the staff in the playroom and is involved in the delivery of the play activities. There are good opportunities to promote improvement through effective self-evaluation and action planning. The support provided is well focused and matches effectively the needs of the pre-school centre. There are six funded children and this is below the enrolment threshold for funded pre-school provision and the management committee need to keep the sustainability of the provision under review.

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

APPENDIX

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The use of a small trampoline in the playroom is a potential health and safety risk.
- The use of a cloth towel shared by the children is a hygiene risk.

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