



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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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 an Inspection

Ballybeen Women's Centre Pre-School Belfast

Inspected: May 2009

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Ballybeen Women's Centre Pre-School
Address:	34 Ballybeen Square Dundonald BELFAST BT16 2QE
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	27 May 2009
Date of previous inspection:	25 November 2003

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	16	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	16	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	16	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	5	-
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	-
• 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	87.2%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

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

Number of: **	
Students	0
Trainees	2

** 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
2¾ hours	-	178

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	16
Percentage returned:	37.5%
Number of written comments:	2

BALLYBEEN WOMEN'S CENTRE PRE-SCHOOL, DUNDONALD, BELFAST, BT16 2QE (4AB-0151)

1. The pre-school centre is situated in the centre of the Ballybeen Estate in Dundonald. Since the last inspection there have been a few staffing changes. There are currently 16 pre-school children attending the centre.

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. A significant minority of the parents responded to the questionnaire; two made additional written comments and they have been shared with the staff. Overall, the responses from the parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision. The responses from the management group and the staff were very positive and supportive of the work of the pre-school centre. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection and were shared with the staff and management group.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The staff work well as a team and demonstrate a strong commitment to the welfare of the children. The working relationships at all levels are very good and there are close links with the parents, local schools and appropriate support agencies.

4. The pre-school centre has very good arrangements in place for safeguarding the children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

5. The centre gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

6. The main strengths within the centre's educational and pastoral provision are as follows.

- The friendly, caring ethos promotes the children's confidence, self-esteem and good behaviour. The staff make very good use of the space available to create an attractive and interesting learning environment for the children.
- The staff provide the children with sustained support during play; their interaction and involvement with the children is of a high quality. They encourage the children to observe and to think; they often engage the children in purposeful discussions about their play and promote a sense of enjoyment in learning.
- The staff have developed very effective methods for observing, recording and reporting on the children's progress. Good use is made of the information to meet the children's differing needs. Regular meetings, throughout the year, are held with the parents to share information about their children's progress and development. Information on the children's progress is passed to the primary schools to which the children transfer.

- During the inspection there were good learning opportunities in all aspects of the pre-school curriculum. The promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development and the development of the children's language and creative skills were particular strengths of the programme. The small outdoor area has been imaginatively designed to provide a wide range of interesting learning opportunities with excellent resources for exploring the natural environment. The centre has a good supply of resources which are further enhanced through the addition of real and authentic items, to support learning in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Excellent provision is made for the children with special educational needs. The centre has a new special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO); she provides very good levels of support for the children with special educational needs, while at the same time encouraging as much integration and independence as possible. The staff liaise with relevant agencies and draw up detailed plans containing clear and realistic steps to support the children's development.
- The centre is very well managed. The leader is a good role-model and is effective in promoting a strong team-spirit among the hard-working staff. The administrator provides excellent support for the pre-school staff by undertaking all of the clerical and administrative work; her involvement allows the staff to concentrate on the development of the provision for the children.

7. The staff have made good use of the Education and Training Inspectorate publication 'Together Towards Improvement'; they have developed an effective approach to self-evaluation and have brought about improvement in important aspects of their work. It is inappropriate that the centre did not receive support by an early years specialist (EYS) from the Early Years Organisation (EYO) for a lengthy period of time. Recently, an EYS was provided; the staff report that she provided some useful support in preparation for the inspection.

8. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is very good. The centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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