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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

Barbour Nursery School
Lisburn

Inspected: November 2008

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON BARBOUR NURSERY SCHOOL, LISBURN (411-6018)

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	26
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	7	5
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	1	3
With English as an additional language	0	0

* On 1 July.

** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the identification and assessment of special educational needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	10%
Average attendance for the previous year.	92%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4½ hours	-	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants	1	4
Qualified Nursery Assistants	0	3

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires (to be completed by Inspection Services Branch)

Number issued	52
Percentage returned	57.7%
Number of written comments	10

BARBOUR NURSERY SCHOOL, LISBURN, CO ANTRIM, BT27 5BZ (411-6018)
INSPECTED: 18 NOVEMBER 2008

1. The nursery school is situated in Ashmount Gardens, in the Hillhall housing estate in the centre of Lisburn. Since the last inspection, a new principal has been appointed.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the nursery through the inspection questionnaires. A majority of the parents responded to the questionnaire and ten made additional written comments. The responses from the parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision and the vast majority of them appreciate:

- the helpful, caring and supportive staff; and
- the warm, friendly atmosphere in the nursery.

The responses from the management group and the staff were also very positive and supportive of the work of the nursery, in particular the positive team-working arrangements. All of 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 excellent. The staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the welfare of the children. The relationships at all levels are very good and there are close links and good communication with the parents, local schools and appropriate support agencies.

4. The nursery has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department but the following minor area needs to be addressed:

- to update the training for the member of the Board of Governors with designated responsibility for child protection.

5. The nursery 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 nursery school's educational and pastoral provision are as follows.

- The nursery has a very positive ethos; there is a welcoming atmosphere and caring working relationships between the staff and the children; the children appear happy and at ease with the staff. The children's play is settled and many show good concentration in their activities; they are encouraged to become independent and to make choices and decisions for themselves and their behaviour is good. The playrooms are bright, attractive and colourful. Good use is made of the space available to create distinct areas for play. The children's own art work, interest areas, posters and photographs are used to create a stimulating learning environment.

- The communication and links with the parents is very good; a booklet, regular newsletters, an open day and a variety of educational classes are designed to encourage the parents to play a full role in the education of their children. There are very good opportunities for informal contact at the beginning and end of the day between the staff and the parents; the staff encourage them to appreciate their children's achievements.
- The curriculum offers very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school programme. The children's learning and development in the well-equipped and challenging outdoor play area and the promotion of their language development are particular strengths of the programme.
- The staff spend sustained periods with groups and individuals, promoting the children's language and thinking and participating as role-models in the play. The quality of the staff's involvement with the children is consistently of a very high standard.
- The written planning outlines a broad and balanced programme for the children, which is designed to foster their all-round development. It identifies many facets of learning inherent in the various aspects of play. A good range of themes and topics is used to introduce a variety of interesting activities in all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- The Principal, who is in her fourth year in post, demonstrates good leadership and management skills and is a good role-model for her staff. All of the staff are hard-working and dedicated and are developing a strong sense of team-spirit.

7. The nursery school has a comprehensive school development plan with appropriate targets for improvement. The staff have developed useful methods of self-evaluation and there is some evidence that the process has led to improvements in the children's learning experiences.

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

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