



*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

**Belmont Pre-School Playgroup
Belfast**

Inspected: January 2009

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Belmont Pre-School Playgroup
Address:	Heyn Hall 2 Sydenham Avenue BELFAST BT4 2DR
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	13 January 2009
Date of previous inspection:	14 May 2003

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	24	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	24	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	24	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	-
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	3	-
• with English as an additional language	0	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	24	-
Attendance:		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	91%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

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

Number of: **	
Students	0
Trainees	0

** 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
3 hours	N/A	187

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	24
Percentage returned:	71%
Number of written comments:	6

BELMONT PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP, BELFAST, BT4 2DR (1AB-0494)

1. The pre-school centre is currently situated in a church hall which is shared with other organisations; the centre has plans in place to move to the grounds of Belmont Primary School later this year. Since the last inspection there has been a complete change of staff; a new leader was appointed and took up post in September 2007. The current early years specialist (EYS) was appointed in January 2009.

2. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the staff and the management committee to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. A majority of the parents responded to the questionnaire and six made additional written comments. Those who responded indicated a high level of satisfaction with the centre's provision and they appreciate:

- the dedication of the staff;
- the quality of the care they provide for the children; and
- the centre is well thought of in the community.

The responses from the management committee and staff were also positive.

3. The provision for pastoral care within the centre is very good. Working relationships are excellent at all levels. The children respond well to the staff's high expectations and care; they appear happy and secure and their behaviour is excellent.

4. The 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, for example, the healthy break and the regular opportunities provided for energetic play, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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

- The staff have worked imaginatively to create a rich and stimulating learning environment with well-resourced areas for different types of play.
- The staff provide an effective, broad and balanced programme with very good opportunities for the children to learn in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The programme is well matched to the interests and stage of development of the children.
- The staff demonstrate a very high level of skill in their work with the children through their interactions and involvement during the play activities, the daily routines and group sessions.

- The children are highly motivated and independent and almost all stay on task for prolonged periods. They co-operate with each other, play imaginatively and creatively and are confident to ask questions and discuss their play. Many show an interest in books and early-marking.
- The session is well organised, ensuring that all of the time available is used effectively to promote learning.
- The very effective leader promotes a strong sense of team-work among the hard-working and dedicated staff.

7. The staff are reflective on their practice and have a strong sense of vision for the continued development of the centre. There is evidence of significant improvements having been made in the provision within the last year by the staff, effectively supported by the management committee. The development plan identifies realistic areas for continued improvement. The contribution made by the centre's EYS to date has important strengths, including support for children with special educational needs. The newly appointed EYS should continue to work with the staff in addressing the priorities within their development plan.

8. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is very good. The pre-school 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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