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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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of an Inspection

**Chatterbox Playgroup
Gillygooley, Omagh**

Inspected: November 2009

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Name of pre-school centre: | Chatterbox Playgroup |
| Address: | Gillygooley Hall 20 Mullagharn Road Gillygooley OMAGH Co Tyrone BT78 5QG |
| Management Type: | Voluntary |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Date of inspection: | 10 November 2009 |
| Date of previous inspection: | 21 November 2002 |

1. Details of Children

| Total number of children: | am session | pm session |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| • attending the pre-school centre | 10 | - |
| • in their immediate pre-school year | 7 | - |
| • funded by Department of Education | 7 | - |
| • qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2 | 0 | - |
| • 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 | 98% | - |

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

| Number of: | Full-time | Part-time |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Staff, including leader | 0 | 2 |
| Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications | 0 | 2 |
| 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 | - | 188 |

4. Parental Questionnaires

| | |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Number issued to parents: | 10 |
| Percentage returned: | 100% |
| Number of written comments: | 4 |

**CHATTERBOX PLAYGROUP, GILLYGOOLEY, OMAGH, CO TYRONE, BT78 5QG
(2AB-0338)**

1. The pre-school centre is situated in purpose-built accommodation in a rural area on the outskirts of Omagh. Since the last inspection in 2002 the staff have changed and the assistant leader is recently appointed. The outdoor provision is at an early stage of development.

2. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. All of the parents responded to the questionnaire and four made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire were wholly positive and indicated that the parents regard the playgroup highly. The responses from the management group and the staff questionnaires were very positive. The management group commented on the dedication and commitment of the staff and their good team-work to promote the best possible quality pre-school provision. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and management of the pre-school centre.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is very good. Relationships between the staff are warm and caring; the children readily turn to the staff for support during play. The children's work is celebrated and attractively displayed; as a result the children take pride in their art work and are developing positive attitudes to learning.

4. The playgroup has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department. The arrangements to update training for the management group and the staff have been identified as priorities.

5. The playgroup gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, through, for example, the daily healthy snack and energetic play activities, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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

- The staff and management group have worked effectively to access grants and funding to provide a bright and stimulating learning environment. The spacious playroom has been organised effectively to include areas of interest which encourage the children to create and explore in a safe and secure environment.
- There is a caring and family atmosphere in the playroom and the staff are responsive to the needs of the children as they settle into the rules and routines of the pre-school centre. The children are well-behaved and co-operative.
- There are very good links with the parents and extended families who engage regularly with the staff about the children. The staff share information about the children's progress and development and appropriately meet with the primary school staff before the children transfer to year one in the primary school.
- The daily timetable is well-organised and provides a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff. The children are effectively developing good social skills, independence and developing the ability to engage in appropriately sustained conversation with the adults and with one another.

- There are good opportunities provided for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The children are confident and well motivated; they often sustain periods of concentrated and productive play. There are particular strengths in the promotion of personal, social, emotional and physical development and learning through the arts programme. A few of the children display good standards of mathematical awareness.
- The enthusiastic leader is a good manager and has developed the pre-school provision effectively. She is ably-supported by the assistant member of staff; all of the staff are hard-working in the best interests of the children.

7. The use of self-evaluation to identify, prioritise and implement improvement is at an early stage of development. The contribution made by the centre's early years specialist (EYS) has strengths, including the advice and guidance on positive behaviour management. There is a need to ensure that the support provided matches the developmental needs of the children more effectively; that there is greater focus on promoting improvement as a result of support within the centre to improve the staff interaction. It will be important that staff work closely with the EYS in order to address these key areas for improvement.

8. The inspection identified the following areas for improvement:

- the development of the planning to identify the learning potential of the activities; and
- the quality of the staff interaction to meet more effectively the individual needs of the children.

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

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