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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

Downpatrick Nursery School
Co Down

Inspected: November 2006

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON DOWNPATRICK NURSERY SCHOOL

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	-
Attending part-time	0	-
Under 3 years of age*	0	-
With statement of SEN**	0	-
At CoP stages 3 or 4***	8	-
At CoP stages 1 or 2***	0	-
With English as an additional language	0	-

* On 1 July.

** Special Educational Needs.

*** 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.	4%
Average attendance for the previous year.	86%

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	1	0
Nursery Assistants	2	0
Qualified Nursery Assistants	2	0

Number of: ****	
Students	1
Trainees	0

**** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	26
Percentage returned	61.5%
Number of written comments	8

**DOWNPATRICK NURSERY SCHOOL, MOUNT CRESCENT, DOWNPATRICK,
CO DOWN, BT30 6AF (411-6176)**

1. The nursery is situated on the ground floor of Downpatrick Resource Centre. Since the last inspection there have been staffing changes. The children come from a wide catchment area.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the nursery through the inspection questionnaires. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection process. Those who responded expressed high levels of satisfaction with almost all aspects of the nursery's provision.

3. The nursery has a comprehensive policy for child protection which is shared with the parents, and is in line with the guidance given by the Department of Education. The staff understand and implement the procedures necessary to safeguard the welfare of the children.

4. The school has a programme for the promotion of the health and well-being of the children. There is a commitment to promoting healthy eating, and very good opportunities are provided for the children to participate in a range of physical activities.

5. The main strengths within the nursery's educational and pastoral provision are as follows.

- There is a very positive ethos based on excellent working relationships at all levels. The children make full use of, and clearly enjoy, the attractive and rich learning environment created for them by the staff. The children display a positive attitude to their learning; they respond well to the high expectations of the staff and their behaviour is exemplary.
- The nursery has established excellent links with the parents who are encouraged to play a full role in the education of their children and the life of the nursery.
- There are very good, and at times excellent, 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 are particular strengths.
- There is a thoughtful approach to planning a programme that provides breadth, variety and progression in the experiences and activities for the children.
- The detailed methods of assessment take account of the children's responses to activities and help to ensure the needs of all the children are well met.
- The staff interact with the children in a caring and supportive manner and the quality of the interaction is consistently of a high standard.
- The thoughtful organisation of the daily timetable provides a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff.

- The Principal is highly dedicated and provides effective leadership for the hard-working staff who work very well as a team. She sets the tone for much of the positive work and development of the nursery.

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

7. The quality of education provided in this nursery is excellent. The educational and pastoral needs of the children are being very well met. The parents can have confidence in the nursery's capacity for sustained self-improvement.

No follow-up inspection is required.

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