

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Forge Integrated Pre-School
Playgroup, Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in April 2010

eti

*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



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Forge Integrated Pre-School Playgroup
Address:	20 Carolan Road BELFAST BT7 3HE
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	12 April 2010
Date of previous inspection:	21 January 2004

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	3	-
• 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	2	-
• 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	85%	-

* 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	1

Number of: **	
Students	1
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	-	184

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	24
Number returned:	50%
Number of written comments:	5

FORGE INTEGRATED PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP, BELFAST, BT7 3HE (1BB-0491)

1. Forge Integrated Pre-school Playgroup is accommodated in a mobile classroom in the grounds of Forge Integrated Primary School. Since the last inspection, there has been a complete change of staff including a new leader, new classroom assistants and several different early years specialists (EYS).

2. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is good. The pre-school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) will monitor the pre-school's progress on the areas for improvement.

3. Almost all of the children demonstrate high levels of independence and autonomy in their personal care, decision-making and use of materials. They are very well settled and engage in periods of sustained and concentrated play across a wide range of activities. The children's creative work is very well developed; they use the materials at the creative area with confidence, for example, to make models and there are many good examples of the children's own, well-developed representational work on display. The children explore and investigate technological equipment and natural materials and plants.

4. The children's language and communication skills are generally well developed. A majority of the children participate in imaginative role-play and most communicate effectively with one another and the staff. The children enjoy books and stories independently and in groups. They participate well in songs and rhymes which they clearly enjoy. Many children can recognise their own name in print and a few children show an interest in early writing. The children identified with speech and language delays are identified early and provided with appropriate support.

5. The staff demonstrate sensitivity and skill in their interactions with the children. They listen to the children's own ideas, have realistically high expectations and promote language and learning effectively through the play and daily routines. The daily routine is managed very effectively to make the best use of all of the time available for learning. There are good links with the adjoining primary school; the good relationships and effective exchange of information between the staff and the parents should be built on further to engage the parents more fully in their children's learning.

6. The staff have developed effective short-term planning which ensures the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum. They have identified the need to continue the development of their long-term planning to ensure progression in all the areas of learning, including energetic physical play and for this planning to be better informed by rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme they provide. The assessment records are used as a basis for both a progress report for parents and the planning of learning activities that meet the individual needs of the children.

7. The provision for pastoral care within the pre-school is very good; especially notable is the very good care and sensitive support provided by the staff and the children's excellent behaviour and very good social skills.

8. The pre-school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department. The staff need to document their risk assessment for trips and provide clearer reporting procedures for staff.

9. The pre-school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating, for example, through the provision of a fruit break and healthy drinks. The children have regular access to outdoor play and are provided with some opportunities to promote their physical development. The small size of the enclosed outdoor area, at times, restricts the children's opportunities for energetic play.

10. The pre-school leader is enthusiastic, hard-working and well motivated. There is evidence of significant improvement in key aspects of the provision since her appointment and she demonstrates a commitment to continued professional development and improvement. The development plan identifies appropriate priorities which now need to be coupled with a more systematic evaluation process. The EYS support has lacked continuity in personnel over recent years and consequently the quality has been inconsistent.

11. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the management committee and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Twelve of the parents responded to the questionnaire and five made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire were highly affirmative of the provision and indicated that the parents appreciate the professional and caring staff and the progress their children are making in their learning and development. The responses from the management committee and the staff questionnaires were also very positive. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and management of the pre-school centre.

12. The key strengths in this pre-school centre include:

- the positive ethos based on very good working relationships and the children's excellent behaviour;
- the attractive and stimulating learning environment;
- the skill of the staff in promoting the children's care, learning and development,
- the broad and balanced programme which provides good or very good opportunities to learn in almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- the very good quality of the children's progress in learning; in particular their independence, social skills and creativity, and
- the effective leadership.

13. The priority identified for improvement is:

- the further development of the long term planning and more rigorous evaluation of the provision.

14. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is good. The pre-school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the pre-school's progress on the area for improvement.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2010

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk

