

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Giggles Day Care Centre -
Pre-School, Newry

Report of an Inspection
in June 2010

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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



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Giggles Day Care Centre - Pre-school
Address:	105 Camlough Road NEWRY Co Down BT35 7EE
Management Type:	Private

Date of inspection:	1 June 2010
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	26	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	10	-
• funded by Department of Education	6	-
• 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	2	-
• with English as an additional language	1	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	1	-
Attendance:		
• attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	93%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	-
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	3	-
New appointments within previous 12 months	1	-

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
2½ hours	N/A	190

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	21
Percentage returned:	57%
Number of written comments:	6

GIGGLES DAY CARE CENTRE - PRE-SCHOOL, NEWRY, CO DOWN, BT35 7EE (5CA-0549)

1. Giggles Pre-school centre is accommodated in purpose-built accommodation on the Camlough Road, Newry; the centre is a privately operated pre-school centre within the Giggles Day Care Centre. The inspection is part of a programme to ensure that appropriate standards of education are provided in centres receiving funding as part of the Government's expansion of pre-school education.

2. In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this pre-school centre is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in learning and teaching, which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) will monitor and report on the pre-school centre's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

3. The children are generally well-settled; they are mannerly and their behaviour is good. During the inspection, the children were often observed engaging in purposeful play and they were able to sustain good levels of concentration in their chosen activities. A few children are beginning to write their names and use mathematical language appropriately during their play. Many of the children create representational paintings and drawings that show good attention to detail that is appropriate for their age and stage of development. Overall, there is evidence that most of the children are making good progress in their learning.

4. During the inspection, the staff often engaged the children in valuable discussion about their play and experiences. They participated sensitively in many of the activities to provide role-models and encourage the children appropriately to observe, to think, to make choices and to extend their play. Recently, useful additional prompts have been added to the various areas of play which support the staff effectively in their work with the children.

PROVISION FOR LEARNING

5. The centre has a very positive ethos. The staff create a calm, supportive and welcoming atmosphere; all of the staff have a caring approach. The children appear happy and at ease with the staff; they are encouraged to become independent and to make choices and decisions for themselves. The playroom is 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 attractive secure environment outdoors provides good opportunities for learning across the curriculum.

6. The daily timetable is well-organised to provide a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff. The children benefit from the lengthy period of uninterrupted play when they can develop their activities; the necessary routines are unobtrusive and organised effectively. The staff should review the large group story time to ensure that it meets the needs of all of the children more effectively.

7. Useful links have been established with the parents through an information booklet, a monthly newsletter, and meetings to discuss their children's progress with the staff. The staff have identified appropriately, that the links with parents now need to be strengthened to include a more systematic approach to sharing information about their children's progress and information about the centre's programme, and to encourage the parents to become

more fully involved in their child's education. Good links have been established with appropriate outside agencies and the schools to which the children will transfer to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for the children into their year one class.

8. The recent improvements to the play programme, recommended by the Early Years Organisation's early years specialist (EYS), have had a beneficial impact on the quality of the provision. On the day of the inspection, an interesting range of well-resourced activities was available for the children. Overall, the centre offers satisfactory opportunities for learning in all the areas of the pre-school curriculum. Particular strengths of the curriculum are the attention given to the promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development, language acquisition and early mathematical ideas.

9. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the pre-school centre is good. There are good working relationships between the staff and the children. The staff treat the children with care and respect and provide a secure, supportive environment, which is helping the children to grow in confidence, independence and to develop consideration for the needs and wishes of others.

10. The centre has very good, comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

11. The pre-school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, as part of the snack routine the children are encouraged to try a range of 'healthy' foods; the centre has received the 'Better Breaks' award. They are also provided with regular opportunities to engage in physical activity.

12. A useful start has been made to planning the educational programme; the range of activities and resources to be used throughout the year has been identified. In order to develop the planning further, there is a need for the staff to work collaboratively to identify clearly the learning inherent in the activities, to use the information gained through the children's observations to take account of the children's differing needs, and to outline progression in the use of resources throughout the year.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

13. The new leader, who has been in post since January 2010, displays a high level of enthusiasm in her work with the children. All of the staff display commitment to the children and the work of the centre; they work together effectively, in the best interests of the children. Recently, the centre's EYS has provided the staff with useful advice and guidance. It will be important for the EYS to provide the new staff team within the centre with more regular and focused support in order to bring about the necessary improvements outlined in the inspection report.

14. The proprietors of the centre are fully committed to providing the staff with ongoing professional development. All of the staff working in the pre-school centre have attended a wide range of appropriate training courses; there is evidence that this training is having a beneficial impact on the quality of provision.

15. The pre-school centre has a development plan and associated action plans, which identify appropriate targets for improvement.

16. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the staff and the management team to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Twelve of the parents responded to the questionnaire and six made additional written comments. The majority of the parents

indicated that they are satisfied with almost all aspects of the centre's provision; in particular they feel that the staff provide a safe and caring environment for the children; minority of the parents indicated that they would welcome more information about the centre's educational programme, their children's progress and child protection matters. Three management questionnaires were received which were positive about their involvement in the work of the centre. The analyses of the questionnaires and all of the responses have been shared with the staff and the management group of the pre-school centre.

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

- the welcoming atmosphere and the care and respect shown to the children by the staff;
- the organisation of the daily timetable which provides a lengthy period of free play;
- the children's sustained levels of concentration in their play and the progress that they have made in their learning and development throughout the year;
- the many instances of good quality interaction between the staff and the children;
- the satisfactory opportunities for learning in all areas of the preschool curriculum; and
- the enthusiasm of the new leader and the developing sense of team-spirit among the hard-working and dedicated staff.

18. The priority identified for improvement is the need to:

- develop further the planning and assessment methods and use them to ensure that the learning inherent in the activities is identified and that the experiences provided for the children progress steadily over the year.

19. In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this pre-school centre is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in learning and teaching which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the pre-school centre's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

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