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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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**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

**Glenravel Community Playgroup
Ballymena**

Inspected: October 2007

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Glenravel Community Playgroup
Address:	St Mary's Parish Hall Lisnamanney Road Martinstown BALLYMENA Co Antrim BT43 6QH
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	3 October 2007
Date of previous inspection:	21 March 2002

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	26	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	26	-
• funded by Department of Education	26	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	0	-
• with a statement of SEN*	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for SEN	0	-
• with English as an additional language	1	-
• 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	86.9%	-

* Special Educational Needs

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	1
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	3	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	1	0

Number of: ***	
Students	0
volunteers	4

*** 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:	26
Percentage returned:	61.5%
Number of written comments:	7

GLENRAVEL COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, MARTINSTOWN, BALLYMENA, CO ANTRIM, BT43 6QH (3AB-0362)

1. The playgroup is situated in the local community centre which is shared with other organisations. Since the last inspection, a new leader has been appointed and took up post in September 2006.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the centre through the inspection questionnaires. The responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision. The few issues raised about the starting time, settling-in period and number of funded places have been discussed with the staff.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection has important strengths. The pre-school centre has some appropriate policies and procedures for child protection. The staff are in the process of reviewing and updating all of their policies. The inspection evidence indicates that the policies and procedures are implemented consistently by the staff.

4. The centre's programme for the promotion of health and well-being has important strengths, with attention paid to the development and implementation of healthy eating and regular opportunities for physical activity to encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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

- The staff prepare the play room on a daily basis to provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment.
- The children are very settled and generally respond well to the staff's expectations of behaviour.
- During the inspection, nearly all of the children displayed high levels of concentrated and productive play as they explored the wide range of activities provided.
- The pre-school programme provides satisfactory opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. On the day of the inspection, particular strengths included the promotion of fine motor skills, imaginative role-play, investigation at the water tray and the enjoyable story and singing session.
- The daily timetable is well structured to provide a lengthy period of free play balanced with group sessions.
- The staff support one another during the session and are developing a team approach. The recently appointed leader has made a good start in developing her role. She demonstrates a good level of professional expertise in her own work with the children.

6. The inspection identified areas for improvement. The following are the most important areas that need attention.

- The level of staff interaction needs to be more consistently effective in promoting the children's independence, language and learning by all of the staff.
- The planning needs to be developed further to build more clearly on the children's own ideas and identify progression in all areas of the pre-school curriculum including more detailed information on the physical play programme.
- The staff need to develop further their methods to ensure that the assessment information is used more effectively to meet individual children's needs.

7. The centre is in the early stages of developing a systematic approach to self-evaluation. The development plan which currently identifies some relevant areas for further improvement should now be updated in line with the inspection findings. The contribution made by the centre's early years specialist has some strengths, including the support for the new leader. However, more focused support needs to be provided to develop all of the individual staff member's level of skill and expertise. It will be important that all of the staff work closely with the leader and the early years specialist in order to address the key areas for improvement.

8. The pre-school centre has strengths in many aspects of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified a few important areas for improvement which need to be addressed to meet effectively the needs of all the children.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the pre-school centre's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

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