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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

**Greystone/Stiles Community Playgroup
Antrim**

Inspected: November 2006

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Greystone/Stiles Community Playgroup
Address:	Stiles Community Centre 11 Fountain Hill Stiles Road Greystone ANTRIM BT41 1LZ
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	7 November 2006
Date of previous inspection:	22 November 2000

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	24	0
• in their immediate pre-school year	13	0
• funded by Department of Education	13	0
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	5	0
• with a statement of SEN*	0	0
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for SEN	1	0
• with English as an additional language	0	0
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	0
Attendance:		0
• percentage attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	90.2%	0

* 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	0
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	3	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	1

*** 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
2¾ hours	-	186

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	24
Percentage returned:	37.5%
Number of written comments:	2

**GREYSTONE/STILES COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, ANTRIM, BT41 1LZ
(3AB-0350)**

1. The centre is accommodated in Stiles Community Hall, Greystone which is shared with a number of other organisations. The children come from the surrounding area.

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 responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection and any issues raised have been shared with the staff.

3. The centre has in place appropriate policies and procedures for child protection. The inspection evidence indicates that all of the staff show a high level of concern for the children's welfare and implement the policies and procedures effectively.

4. The pre-school centre demonstrates a strong commitment to promoting healthy eating habits among the children. The children have daily opportunities to participate in a range of appropriate energetic activities.

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

- the positive ethos promotes a settled and caring atmosphere. The children respond well to the staff's expectations and their behaviour is good;
- the staff work hard to make imaginative use of the equipment and all available space. The hall is arranged thoughtfully with distinct areas for aspects of play;
- the happy and settled children engage purposefully in their learning experiences. Relationships among the staff and the children are very good;
- the staff spend sustained periods with groups and individuals, promoting the children's language and thinking and participating effectively in the play;
- there are good opportunities for learning in most areas of the pre-school curriculum. The children maintain good levels of co-operative play throughout the session. The promotion of language and literacy and the provision of imaginative and creative experiences for the children are particular strengths;
- the smooth organisation of the day ensures that all time is used effectively to promote learning. Appropriate time is given to a group story and physical play sessions. The snack time is organised informally and provides good opportunities for the children to develop independence, and to acquire social skills;
- there is a strong sense of team-spirit among the hard-working and dedicated staff. Relevant and informative advice is being provided by the centre's early years specialist; and
- there are good links with the local primary schools and other professionals.

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

- The staff need to continue to develop the methods of planning and assessment to ensure that the information gained through the observation of the children's play is used to inform future plans.
- The programme for physical play requires further development in order to provide the children with a greater variety of experiences.

7. The staff's use of 'Together Towards Improvement' has provided a good starting point for the self-evaluation process. They have identified an appropriate area for development, reflected constructively on their practice, and have collaborated as a team to introduce and monitor new approaches.

8. The pre-school centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified minor areas for improvement which the pre-school centre has the capacity to address. The pre-school centre's progress on the areas for improvement will be monitored by the District Inspector.

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