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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

**Jack Horner Community Playgroup
Ballycastle**

Inspected: January 2007

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Jack Horner Community Playgroup
Address:	Sheskburn Community Centre 7 Mary Street BALLYCASTLE Co Antrim BT54 6QH
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	9 January 2007
Date of previous inspection:	9 November 2000

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	19	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	19	-
• funded by Department of Education	19	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	7	-
• with a statement of SEN*	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for SEN	1	-
• with English as an additional language	1	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
Attendance:		
• percentage attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	90%	-

* 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	4	0
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	4	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	1	0

Number of: ***	
Students	3
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	-	188

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	18
Percentage returned:	77.8%
Number of written comments:	3

**JACK HORNER COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, BALLYCASTLE, CO ANTRIM
BT54 6QH (3AB 0245)**

1. The centre is located in the Community Centre in Ballycastle. The children come mainly from the surrounding area. The leader was recently appointed.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the centre through the inspection questionnaires. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection. In their response, nearly all of the parents were satisfied or very satisfied with all aspects of the centre's provision.

3. The pre-school centre has appropriate policies and procedures for child protection that comply with Department of Education Circulars and guidance. The inspection evidence indicates that these policies and procedures are implemented effectively and consistently to safeguard the children.

4. The staff have begun to implement practices to promote healthy eating habits among the children. There are regular opportunities for the children to participate in a range of physical activities.

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

- There is a positive ethos based on good relationships at all levels.
- The playroom is attractively presented and there are interesting and varied activities provided throughout the year for the children.
- The staff have developed valuable links with the parents and the local primary schools. The parents are kept informed about their children's progress and development and information is passed to the primary schools to which the children will transfer.
- There are satisfactory learning opportunities in most aspects of the pre-school curriculum; at times the approach to developing the children's creativity is too formal.
- The written planning has developed in recent months and is helpful in guiding the staff in their work with the children.
- The leader demonstrates a reflective approach to her work. The staff are hard-working and dedicated and work well as a team.

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

- The staff need to develop further the assessment methods to ensure that the children's progress and development are monitored more consistently throughout the year, and the information gained is used more effectively to inform the planning.

- The staff need to review aspects of the organisation of the daily timetable to ensure all the time is used effectively to promote learning and to meet the needs of individual children more fully.

7. The centre has made a useful start in developing its approaches to self-evaluation. Several important areas have been identified for development work and action plans have been drawn up to support the work.

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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