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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 a Focused Inspection

**Killough Playgroup
Downpatrick**

Inspected: January 2007

Name of pre-school centre:	Killough Playgroup
Address:	64 Main Street Killough DOWNPATRICK Co Down BT30 7QD
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	17 January 2007
Date of previous inspection:	29 March 2001

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	16	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	10	-
• funded by Department of Education	10	-
• 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	1	-
• with English as an additional language	0	-
• 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	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	-	2
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	-	2
New appointments within previous 12 months	-	0

Number of: ***	
Students	1
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
3 hours	-	190

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	16
Percentage returned:	68.75%
Number of written comments:	3

KILLOUGH PLAYGROUP, DOWNPATRICK, CO DOWN, BT30 7QD (4BB-0388)

1. The centre is located in a mobile classroom in the grounds of St Joseph's Primary School. The children come mainly 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 have been taken into account as part of the inspection. The responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the centre's provision.

3. The centre has an excellent ethos and comprehensive policies and procedures for child protection that comply with the Department of Education (DE) circulars and guidance. The inspection evidence indicates that these policies and procedures are understood and implemented effectively by the staff.

4. The staff demonstrate a commitment to promoting healthy eating habits. 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.**

- The centre has a very positive ethos based on good working relationships at all levels. The children respond well to the staff's expectations and their behaviour is good. The learning environment is attractive and stimulating.
- The centre's educational programme provides good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development, language and early scientific skills are particular strengths of the programme.
- The children's play is settled and many show good concentration in their activities; they are encouraged to become independent and to make choices.
- The written planning is developing well and is helpful in guiding the staff in their work with the children; however, there are aspects of the assessment methods that need further development.
- The thoughtful organisation of the daily timetable provides a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff.
- The leader, with the support of the management committee and wider community, has brought about many improvements since the last inspection; she gives effective leadership and demonstrates enthusiasm and commitment to developing the work of the centre. There is a strong sense of team-spirit among the hard-working and dedicated staff who all contribute to the good quality of the provision.
- The newly developed outdoor play and sensory garden areas provide very good opportunities for the staff to broaden the children's learning experiences and for the development of a wide range of physical skills.

6. Currently, the centre has no development plan and has not yet made a start in developing its approaches to self-evaluation.

7. The pre-school centre has major strengths in its educational and pastoral provision. The educational and pastoral needs of the children are being well met. The parents can have confidence in the pre-school centre's capacity for sustained self-improvement.

No follow-up inspection is required.

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