



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
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*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**

**Lollipop Playgroup  
Donaghmore**

**Inspected: May 2009**

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school centre:</b>	Lollipop Playgroup
<b>Address:</b>	58 Castlecaulfield Road DONAGHMORE Co Tyrone BT70 3HE
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	28 May 2009
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	29 January 2004

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
• attending the pre-school centre	26	26
• in their immediate pre-school year	26	26
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	26	26
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	3
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	0
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	1
• with English as an additional language	0	1
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	0
<b>Attendance:</b>		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	89.2%	86.1%

\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	3
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	3	2
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: **	
Students	1
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	2½ hours	188

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	52
Percentage returned:	80.8%
Number of written comments:	25

## **LOLLIPOP PLAYGROUP, DONAGHMORE, CO TYRONE, BT70 3HE (5AB-0198)**

1. Lollipop Playgroup is situated on the Castlecaulfield Road in Donaghmore. It serves the pre-school population of Donaghmore, Castlecaulfield and Pomeroy. There are currently 52 children attending the centre, 26 in the morning and 26 in the afternoon; three children have been identified as having additional needs. At the time of the inspection the group was operating in temporary accommodation in a building adjoining St Joseph's Grammar School. Since the last inspection there have been significant staffing changes.

2. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the management group and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Most of the parents responded to the questionnaire and 25 made additional written comments. The responses from the parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision. They are all very appreciative of:

- the very caring, welcoming learning environment;
- the wide range of stimulating learning activities provided for the children; and
- the effort and commitment of all of the staff in meeting the children's needs.

The responses from the management group and the staff were also very positive and supportive of the work of the centre. In particular the management group appreciate the efficient, caring staff and the smooth, effective management of the centre. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection and were shared with the staff and management group.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the centre is excellent. The friendly, caring ethos promotes the children's confidence, self-esteem and excellent behaviour. There are excellent working relationships at all levels and every effort is made to secure the necessary resources to meet the children's needs.

4. The centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department. The committee member who had received child protection training has recently become a member of the playgroup staff. It is therefore necessary to identify and train a new designated child protection person from within the committee.

5. The centre gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, through their participation in the Boost Better Breaks scheme and through regular, energetic outdoor play. These encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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

- There is an atmosphere of enjoyment and productivity throughout the centre. The temporary accommodation and grounds are being used effectively to create a stimulating learning environment which promotes the children's curiosity, creativity and independence; the children play co-operatively together and respond well to the high expectations of the staff.
- The daily sessions and routines are very well organised with effective, purposeful use of all of the time available; the staff interact very effectively with the children to extend their language and to build on their ideas and interests. The interactions are of a consistently high quality.
- There are excellent learning opportunities in all aspects of the pre-school curriculum. The children are confident, independent and show sustained interest in their activities. The promotion of their creativity and language development through role-play is a particular strength of the programme.
- There is excellent provision for the children with special educational needs; the staff provide very good levels of support whilst encouraging as much independence as possible. They develop effective individual learning plans for the children which are reviewed regularly with the parents and they liaise with a wide range of external agencies to identify suitable resources and activities to meet the children's needs; the teachers' observations indicate that the children are making good progress.
- There are excellent working relationships with the parents; they contribute significantly to the life and work of the centre; their views on aspects of the provision within the centre are actively sought, valued and acted upon. There are very effective methods for information sharing about the children.
- The centre is very well managed. The leader is an excellent role-model who displays outstanding leadership and management skills. She is ably supported by the highly motivated and skilled team.

7. The playgroup leader is also the early years specialist. She has led the staff and management committee in the effective evaluation of provision across the curriculum. The outcomes from these evaluations, together with regular consultation with the parents, have been used to inform the centre's development and action planning.

8. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The centre has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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