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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
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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**

**Newmills Playgroup  
Dungannon**

**Inspected: May 2009**

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school centre:</b>	Newmills Playgroup
<b>Address:</b>	82A Annaginney Road Newmills DUNGANNON Co Tyrone BT71 4EA
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	6 May 2009
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	2 February 2004

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
• attending the pre-school centre	24	15
• in their immediate pre-school year	24	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	24	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	2	-
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	-
• with English as an additional language	0	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
<b>Attendance:</b>		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	92%	-

\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

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

<b>Number of:**</b>	
Students	1
Trainees	1
Volunteers	1

\*\* Total placements since September of current year

## 3. Details of Sessions

<b>Duration of morning session</b>	<b>Duration of afternoon session</b>	<b>Number of days open in previous year</b>
3 hours	2¼ hours two afternoons per week.	188

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	24
Percentage returned:	70.8%
Number of written comments:	11

## **NEWMILLS PLAYGROUP, DUNGANNON, CO TYRONE, BT71 4EP (5AB-0186)**

1. Newmills Playgroup is situated on the Annaginney Road, approximately five miles from Dungannon. Since the last inspection there has been a change of leader in the centre; the current leader has been in post for two years. There are 24 children attending the centre, with most of them coming from the immediate Newmills area.

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. A majority of the parents responded to the questionnaire and eleven made additional written comments. The responses from all of the parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision. They are all very appreciative of:

- the very caring, supportive, and enthusiastic staff;
- the welcoming environment; and
- the regular information which they receive about what is happening in the centre.

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 friendly, highly-motivated staff and their commitment to meeting the learning needs of all of the children. 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 very good. The staff are very attentive to the children's needs; they are positive and encouraging in their interactions with the children and they work well together as a team.

4. The centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding the children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department, but the following minor areas need to be addressed:

- there is a need for the centre's intimate care policy to be explained to the parents each year, and for the code of conduct for staff to be included in the child protection policy.

5. The centre gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example through the 'Boost Better Breaks' scheme and the healthy lifestyles courses offered to parents.

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

- The warm, caring ethos which effectively promotes the children's self-esteem and celebrates their achievements and the bright, well organised spacious environment.

- The very good behaviour of all of the children; there were many examples of sustained, concentrated play. The children play together co-operatively, listen attentively and respond well to the adults.
- The satisfactory to good provision for learning in all aspects of the pre-school curriculum. The opportunities for the children to respond to music and to develop an awareness of their environment are particular strengths of the provision.
- The very good working relationships at all levels and the significant contribution which the parents make to the life and work of the centre.
- The very good balance between free play and structured activities and the smooth transitions between activities throughout the day.
- The strong team-spirit which permeates all aspects of the centre; the leader and staff work effectively together to ensure the development and smooth organisation of the playgroup.

**7. The inspection identified the following area for improvement:**

- for the staff to further develop the use of observations to inform planning, to guide practice and to meet the needs of all of the children.

8. The staff are implementing some useful methods of self-evaluation which include annual consultation with parents. The outcomes from these evaluations have been used to inform the three year development plan for the playgroup. The recently appointed early years specialist has made a very good contribution to the overall development of the provision in this pre-school centre. The support provided is well focused, in particular the cluster support, the regular visits to the centre and the appropriate areas identified for improvement.

9. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the centre is good. The centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the centre has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the centre's progress on the areas for improvement.

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