

eti

*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

**Our Lady's Nursery School
Belfast**

Inspected: February 2007

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON OUR LADY'S NURSERY SCHOOL, BELFAST

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	26
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of SEN**	0	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4***	3	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2***	0	2
With English as an additional language	0	0

* On 1 July.

** Special Educational Needs.

*** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	40%
Average attendance for the previous year.	91%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4½ hours	-	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants	0	1
Qualified Nursery Assistants	2	0

Number of: ****	
Students	4
Trainees	0

**** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	52
Percentage returned	65%
Number of written comments	19

**OUR LADY'S NURSERY SCHOOL, BELFAST BT14 6NN (113-6251) – INSPECTED
27 FEBRUARY 2007**

1. The nursery is situated in purpose-built accommodation in Deanby Gardens. It provides full-time provision for the 52 children enrolled. The children come from within a radius of four miles.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the nursery through the inspection questionnaires. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection and all expressed a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the nursery's provision, particularly praising the work of the Principal and the staff, the educational programme, the caring supportive ethos, and the Extended Schools provision.

3. The nursery has a comprehensive and suitable written policy on child protection. The staff implement appropriate procedures, in line with the relevant Department of Education (DE) circulars, to safeguard the welfare of the children. The policy is shared with the parents.

4. The nursery demonstrates a strong commitment to promoting a healthy lifestyle among the children. Very good opportunities are provided for the children to participate in a wide range of energetic physical activities.

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

- The very positive ethos helps to promote the children's confidence, self-esteem and good behaviour. The nursery is very attractively presented and the well-resourced and organised environment helps to foster a settled climate for learning where children's play is both purposeful and productive. Relationships at all levels are excellent.
- The staff are highly skilful in naturally promoting language and learning through the play activities, group-sessions and daily routines. They ask appropriate questions, extend the children's ideas and thinking and match their support effectively to the children's abilities.
- The daily timetable and necessary routines are organised to ensure smooth transitions and make the most effective use of all the time available to promote learning.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced providing excellent opportunities for learning across all six areas of the pre-school curriculum. The programme is well matched to the children's ages and stages of development. During the inspection, the children demonstrated high levels of motivation, concentration and autonomy displaying very positive attitudes to learning.

- The staff plan together and have a good shared understanding of the learning to be promoted through the play activities and how this will progress over the year. The planning is implemented effectively by all of the staff. The weekly evaluations and detailed assessment records on the children's progress are used to ensure there is a close match between the planning and the needs of the children.
- The staff have developed excellent links with the parents and encourage them to play a full role in the education of their children and the life of the nursery school. Information on the curriculum and their children's progress is shared regularly through a variety of means.
- The nursery has a comprehensive policy for special educational needs. The staff know their children well and provide sensitive and effective support for those children who require additional support.
- The quality of the accommodation is excellent. The space is used imaginatively to provide the children with a wide range of experiences. The outdoor area has been thoughtfully designed and developed to provide a large variety of learning opportunities for physical play and for exploring the natural environment.
- A particular feature of the nursery is the promotion and development of additional services to support the families within the community. Valuable links have been developed with Sure Start to provide a Mother and Toddler group and funding has been received through the Extended Schools initiative to provide additional care before and after the nursery day.

6. The Principal is highly motivated and has a clear commitment to providing quality provision for the children and families within the local community. She demonstrates professional expertise in her work with the children and manages the school effectively. There is a strong sense of team-work among the hard-working and dedicated staff.

7. The staff reflect constructively on their practice, have identified appropriate areas for development, and have collaborated as a team to introduce and monitor new approaches. There is good evidence that their efforts have improved the children's experiences. The nursery has a comprehensive school development plan with appropriate targets for improvement.

8. The quality of education provided in this nursery is outstanding. The educational and pastoral needs of the children are being very well met. The parents can have confidence in the nursery's capacity for sustained self-improvement.

No follow-up inspection is required.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2007

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the DE website: www.deni.gov.uk or may be obtained from the Inspection Services Branch, Department of Education, Rathgael House, 43 Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down BT19 7PR.