

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Comgall's Pre-School
Education Centre, Bangor

Report of an Inspection
in January 2013

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In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	St Comgall's Pre-School Education Centre
Address:	St Comgall's Parish Centre Brunswick Road BANGOR Co Down BT20 3DS
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	22 January 2013
Date of previous inspection:	November 2005

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	24	-
in their immediate pre-school year	24	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	24	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	0	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	-
with English as an additional language	1	-
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	96%	-

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	0
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	0
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	0
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
3 hours	-	

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	24
Percentage returned	75%
Number of written comments:	11

1. Introduction

St Comgall's Pre-school Education Centre is located in St Comgall's Parish Centre on Brunswick Road in Bangor, County Down. The playgroup was last inspected in November 2005.

2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations and from a range of documentation provided by the playgroup.

The views of the parents and staff were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Eighteen of the parents (75 %) responded to the questionnaire; eleven of these parents made additional written comments. All of the responses from the parental questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the quality of the provision within the playgroup; in particular, the parents expressed their appreciation of the caring, approachable and supportive staff. The responses from the staff and management committee were also positive and supportive of the work of the playgroup.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is very good. The playgroup is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Very Good Very Good Good
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's achievements

- The children are very well settled and are developing positive attitudes to their learning.
- During the inspection, the children explored all areas of play freely and engaged in sustained, purposeful play across a range of activities.
- The children display high levels of independence and make very good use of the books and writing materials available throughout the playroom.
- The children's creative work and mark-making skills are very well developed.

5. Provision for learning

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is very good. The staff know the children well; they are caring and support the children well in their play activities. There is a positive, friendly ethos throughout the setting; the children's behaviour is exemplary.

- During the inspection, the quality of the interaction between the staff and the children was consistently very good. The staff model good play and develop the children's language and thinking skills through the use of open-ended questions.
- The staff have worked hard to create an attractive environment for the children; they make good use of the children's art work, appropriate posters and topical displays to enhance the playroom.
- The staff have developed a systematic approach to observing the children at play and to recording their responses. They use this information well to inform both their short-term planning for the activities provided and to meet the needs of individual children.
- The children are provided with a healthy snack and have opportunities for energetic physical play. The organisation of the physical play routine requires review in order to make better use of the time and space available.

6. **Leadership and management**

- The staff have a very good team approach to the development work of the playgroup. They have made a good start to the process of self-evaluation and have identified areas for improvement in aspects of the playgroup's work. There is now a need for the staff and management committee to extend the evaluation process across all areas of the playgroup's work.
- The staff have developed good links with the parents. They keep them up to date with their child's progress and inform them about aspects of the provision and work of the playgroup through a regular, informative newsletter. The playgroup has developed good links with the local primary school.
- The independent early years specialist (EYS) provides good support for the playgroup staff. She now needs to help the staff to develop further the process of self-evaluation.
- On the basis of information available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is very good. The playgroup is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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