



*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

St Joseph's Nursery School
Antrim

Inspected: January 2008

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ST JOSEPH'S NURSERY SCHOOL, ANTRIM

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	0
Attending part-time	0	52
Under 3 years of age*	0	11
With statement of special educational needs	0	1
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	6	8
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	5	6
With English as an additional language	1	4

* On 1 July

** 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.	28%
Average attendance for the previous year.	87%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4½ hours	2½ hours	2½ hours

3. Details of Staff

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

Number of: ***	
Students	2
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires (to be completed by Inspection Services Branch)

Number issued	78
Percentage returned	41%
Number of written comments	12

ST JOSEPH'S NURSERY SCHOOL, ANTRIM, BT41 1JZ (313-6183)
DATE OF INSPECTION: 30 JANUARY 2008

1. The nursery is situated in a purpose-built facility in the Greystone Road, Antrim. The majority of the children come from the local areas of Stiles, Greystone and the wider community. The school operates a mixed pattern of attendance; 52 children attend the school on a part-time basis and 26 children attend full-time.

2. The parents, staff and governors were given opportunities to express their views about the nursery through the inspection questionnaires. The responses returned indicate a high level of satisfaction with the provision and have been shared with the staff and governors.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection in the nursery is excellent. It has comprehensive policies and procedures for child protection that comply fully with the Department of Education Circulars and guidance. The inspection evidence indicates that these policies and procedures are implemented effectively by all of the staff who show a very high level of concern for the children's welfare.

4. The nursery gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, and has effective policies and programmes in place to encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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

- The very positive ethos promotes successfully the children's self-confidence, self-esteem and very good behaviour.
- The daily timetable provides suitable periods of uninterrupted play, during which the children have adequate time to make choices and to explore appropriately the full range of activities in the open-plan arrangement. The routines are unobtrusive and are used effectively to develop the children's sense of responsibility towards each other and the learning environment.
- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is of an excellent quality that develops effectively the children's oral language and their thinking skills.
- There are very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. There are particular strengths in the promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development and the early mathematical and scientific concepts.
- All of the staff contribute to the planning for play. They identify appropriate themes and use the evaluations of the children's responses to the activities effectively to influence future planning and to inform parents about their child's progress.

- The children with additional learning needs are integrated fully into the play sessions. The staff are aware of their particular needs and use effective strategies when working with these children, which are reflected appropriately in the education plans. There are valuable links with the parents and other professionals.

6. The nursery Principal is an excellent practitioner and is highly committed to providing quality pre-school education for the children and families of the community. The staff are a dedicated and highly effective team. The established culture of reflection and review is evident within their practice. This is exemplified in the comprehensive strategic plan and associated action plans that identify a cycle of continuous improvement which benefits the children's learning experiences.

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

No follow-up inspection is required.

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