

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Tandragee Nursery School,
Co Armagh

Report of an Inspection
in January 2013



Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

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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 ON TANDRAGEE NURSERY SCHOOL

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Attending full-time	27	0	0
Attending part-time	0	26	26
Under 3 years of age*	0	0	4
With statement of special educational needs	2	0	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs			
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	2	0	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	10	9	4
With English as an additional language	0	0	1

* 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.	14
Average attendance for the previous year.	91%

2. Duration of Sessions

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

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	2	1
Nursery Assistants (non-qualified)	0	1

Number of: ***	
Students	3
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	79
Percentage returned	49%
Number of written comments	24

1. Introduction

Tandragee Nursery School is located on Madden Road, Tandragee, County Armagh. Since the last inspection, in 2005, the nursery school has experienced changes in staffing which resulted in the use of a number of temporary staff.

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 nursery school.

The views of the parents, staff, and governors were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Seventy-nine questionnaires were issued to the parents and 49% were returned with twenty-four written comments. All of the staff and one of the governors completed their questionnaires. All of the responses received were highly positive about all aspects of the nursery school's work. The parents praised the hard-working and dedicated staff and many commented on the progress their child had made since starting in the nursery school.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is very good. The nursery school 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 Very Good
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's Achievements

The quality of the children's achievements is very good.

- The children are well-settled, highly motivated and happy to talk about their learning activities. They make creative use of the learning resources provided; they can access and store the resources independently, demonstrating a growing sense of responsibility for the learning environment. The children play together co-operatively, taking increasing account of the needs and interests of others. During the inspection, there were many examples of sustained purposeful play.
- During the inspection, the staff used appropriate mathematical language and many of the children were able to count, match sort and use positional language naturally when participating in a range of activities.

- The staff make effective use of incidental conversation to extend the children's vocabulary. The children browse frequently in the book area and the adults read stories at the children's request; the children listen attentively during group story time. The availability of an appropriate range of writing tools and materials, both indoors and outdoors, provides the children with very good opportunities to develop their experimental writing skills. Many of the children are attempting to write their own names. There is evidence of them developing appropriate attention to detail in their early representational drawings and paintings.

5. Provision for Learning

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

- The atmosphere in the nursery school is characterised by a sense of enjoyment and productivity; most of the play areas have been skilfully developed to capture the children's interests and to foster their creativity and imagination. The warm, respectful atmosphere promotes the children's self-esteem and helps them develop the confidence to try new experiences; the daily session is well organised with effective, purposeful use of all the time available for learning.
- Since the last inspection, much effort has been given to developing the outdoor provision. The enclosed outdoor play area provides an excellent extension to the playroom where the children benefit from a wide range of interesting activities when the weather is too inclement to avail of outdoor activities.
- The adult interactions with the children are consistently of a very high standard; the staff engage meaningfully in the play activities; they value the children's opinions and build effectively on their ideas; they make very effective use of the small group sessions to extend the children's learning.
- There are very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum; the development of the children's language and communication skills and of their understanding of early mathematical concepts are particular strengths of the nursery school's provision.
- The activities on offer provide a good variety of stimulating learning experiences for the children in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff are developing the use of their observations, to identify the children's individual needs and to inform their subsequent interactions with them. It will be important for the staff to continue to develop their use of their observations to plan for progression in the children's learning throughout the year.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the nursery school is very good. This is evidenced through the staff's ongoing response to the children's interests and the excellent working relationships at all levels.
- The nursery school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating through the provision of a healthy snack and, where appropriate, encouragement to parents to provide the children with a healthy packed lunch.

6. Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is very good

- The Principal is well-organised, enthusiastic and committed to the ongoing development of the nursery school's work for the children and the community. Her effective leadership and management is underpinned by good teamwork and the excellent contribution made by the assistant teacher and classroom assistants.
- Since the last inspection in 2005, the staff have been developing their self-evaluation strategies to promote improvement. The staff have identified appropriate areas of the school's work for further development.
- There are very good links with the parents. They are kept informed about events within the nursery school through information on the parents' notice board and through an informative newsletter. They also receive information about their child's progress through informal meetings and through written reports.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the nursery school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education but the following minor areas need to be addressed:
 - written permission should be obtained from the parents to allow the staff to change their children when necessary; and
 - all information relating to toileting procedures should be reviewed and shared with the parents.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is very good. The nursery school 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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