

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Taylorstown Community
Playgroup, Toomebridge

Report of an Inspection
in March 2010

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Taylorstown Community Playgroup
Address:	71 Taylorstown Road TOOMEBRIDGE Co Antrim BT41 3RW
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	24 March 2010
Date of previous inspection:	13 October 2004

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	23	16
• in their immediate pre-school year	19	0
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	19	0
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	0	0
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	0
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	0
• with English as an additional language	0	0
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	1	0
Attendance:		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	89%	

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	4
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	4
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: **	
Students	1
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	2½ hours	188

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	19
Percentage returned:	63%
Number of written comments:	3

**TAYLORSTOWN COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, TOOMEBRIDGE, CO ANTRIM, BT41 3RW
(3AB-0132)**

1. Taylorstown Cross Community Playgroup is situated in purpose-built accommodation within its own grounds. Since the last inspection, the staff have developed the outdoor play spaces and have recently acquired a canopy to create an all-weather play area. The current early years specialist was appointed in May 2009.

2. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents the staff and the management committee to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. A majority of the parents (63%) responded to the questionnaire and three made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire were positive and indicated that the parents regard the pre-school centre very highly. The responses from the management committee and the staff questionnaires were very positive. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and management of the centre.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the centre is very good. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to ensure the welfare of the children. The atmosphere is very warm and welcoming, relationships at all levels are very positive and the children's behaviour is very good.

4. The centre has very good, comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

5. The centre gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The children have access to healthy snacks and drinking water, and information about the centre's healthy eating policy is shared with the parents. The children have daily opportunities for energetic physical play.

6. The children are confident, well-settled and very familiar with the daily routines. Their play is purposeful and they show sustained interest in many of the activities provided. Their fine motor skills are well-developed and their paintings and drawings are showing signs of simple representations. Many of the children are using mathematical language appropriately during their play and they show a very good interest in books and early writing. They recognise their own names and a small number are able to write familiar letter shapes.

7. The children communicate well with the staff and with each other. They can talk with ease about their play and their interests. The adult interactions are caring and supportive and they engage the children in natural conversations about familiar experiences. The adults are very skilful in extending the children's language and thinking. The staff have identified those children with language difficulties or delay, and they work closely with the parents to support the work of the local speech therapists. Appropriate, well-focused learning plans have been developed and there is evidence that these children are making progress.

8. The staff have created an attractive and stimulating learning environment, both indoors and in the outdoor play areas. The resources are carefully labelled for the children; they are easily accessed and offer variety and choice. The daily routines are well-established and provide long periods of uninterrupted play. There are very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the curriculum.

9. The children experience a broad and balanced programme and appropriate planning systems have been developed. The planning is evaluated daily and the staff make good efforts to ensure sufficient progression and challenge. The staff make regular observations of the children's responses to the planned programme. There is a need to ensure that the written assessments are linked more closely to the intended learning and that the children's records reflect more clearly their progress and development across all areas of the curriculum.

10. The leader manages the centre very effectively and is a very good role-model in her work with the children. The staff work very well together; they share roles and responsibilities and have a very clear understanding of the pre-school curriculum. The staff have established a strong culture of self-evaluation, and they regularly identify appropriate areas for review and improvement. The centre's early years specialist has made a very good contribution to the development of the centre. The support provided is well-focused and clearly linked to the priorities highlighted by the staff in the centre's comprehensive development plan.

11. The key strengths in this pre-school centre include:

- the very positive ethos and the quality of the learning environment;
- the progress being made by the children across all areas of learning;
- the staff's skilful interactions, which help extend the children's learning and promote purposeful, concentrated play;
- the support provided for those children with special educational needs; and
- the well-embedded culture of self-evaluation leading to on-going improvement in provision and practice.

12. 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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