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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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

**Tiny Tots Community Playgroup
Kells, Ballymena**

Inspected: May 2008

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Tiny Tots Community Playgroup
Address:	Unit 1 19 Main Street Kells BALLYMENA Co Antrim BT42 3JH
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	20 May 2008
Date of previous inspection:	4 March 2002

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	26	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	21	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	21	-
• 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	1	-
• with English as an additional language	0	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
Attendance:		
• percentage attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	87%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	5
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	5
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
2 ½ hours	-	188

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	23
Percentage returned:	78%
Number of written comments:	8

**TINY TOTS COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, KELLS, BALLYMENA, CO ANTRIM,
BT42 3JH (3AB-0372)**

1. The pre-school centre is situated in the village of Kells. Since the last inspection, the centre has moved to new accommodation and there have been a number of staffing changes. A new leader was appointed and took up post in September 2002, and a new deputy leader was appointed and took up post in September 2006.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the centre through the inspection questionnaires. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection. Those who responded expressed very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the work of the centre.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection in the pre-school centre is excellent. The centre has an excellent ethos and comprehensive policies and procedures for child protection. The inspection evidence indicates all of the staff show a high level of concern for the children's welfare and implement the policies and procedures very effectively.

4. The centre gives excellent attention to promoting health and well-being, including opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity, and has effective policies and programmes in place which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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

- The centre has a very positive ethos with a clear sense of purpose, and a strong community spirit. The staff are caring and supportive and relationships at all levels are excellent. The children show high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They respond well to the adults' expectations and their behaviour is very good.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is consistently of a high standard; through skilful questioning and natural conversations, they stimulate and sustain the children's interest and promote co-operative and purposeful play.
- There are very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. There is a good emphasis on promoting the children's language development, supporting their creativity and their understanding of the world around them.
- The staff have developed valuable methods of involving the parents and the wider community in the work of the centre. Much has been done to ensure the children experience smooth transitions from home to pre-school and on to primary school; in addition, very effective pastoral and curricular links have been established with the primary school to which most of the children will transfer.

- The staff work well together as a team, sharing roles and responsibilities: they have created an attractive and stimulating learning environment and have developed appropriate systems of planning which effectively guide them in their day-to-day work with the children.

6. The leader manages the centre very effectively; she has a clear vision for its future development. The staff are using the process of self-evaluation very well to identify appropriate areas for review and improvement. A sound development plan has been drafted to help take forward these priorities. The early years specialist has made a very good contribution to the overall development of the provision in this centre. The support is well focused, in particular the opportunities provided for the staff to visit other centres and share good practice. The staff should continue to develop the process of self-evaluation through the systematic gathering of evidence of the improvement in the children's learning experiences.

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

No follow-up inspection is required.

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