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*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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of an Inspection

St Kieran's Nursery School
Poleglass, Dunmurry, Belfast

Inspected: October 2009

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ST KIERAN'S NURSERY SCHOOL,
POLEGLASS, DUNMURRY, BELFAST (413-6481)**

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	26
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	1	3
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	1
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	1	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	5	4
With English as an additional language	0	0

* 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.	57.7%
Average attendance for the previous year.	73%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4 ½ hours	N/A	N/A

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants	0	0
Qualified Nursery Assistants	2	2

Number of: ***	
Students	2
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	40
Percentage returned	42.5%
Number of written comments	5

**ST KIERAN'S NURSERY SCHOOL, POLEGLASS, DUNMURRY, BELFAST,
BT17 0PB (413-6481)
INSPECTED: 1 OCTOBER 2009**

1. The nursery school is situated in the grounds of St Kieran's Primary School, Poleglass. Since the last inspection, a new principal has been appointed and is in her second year in post. There are currently 52 children attending the nursery; almost all of the children come from the surrounding area.

2. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the governors and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. A significant minority of the parents responded to the questionnaire and five made additional written comments. The parents indicated that they regard the nursery very highly and see it as a valuable asset to the community. Almost all of the responses from the governors and the staff were wholly positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the nursery. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and governors of the nursery.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the nursery is very good. The nursery has a very positive ethos and the working relationships at all levels are very good. The supportive atmosphere helps the children grow in confidence and self-esteem.

4. The nursery has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department. A few minor areas need to be addressed by the governors and the Principal. These include the need to:

- consult with parents on the existing draft discipline policy; and
- ensure that all governors who sit on the interview/appointment panels receive specific training on recruitment and vetting of staff.

5. The nursery gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, healthy food choices for snack time. The areas for improvement identified include the need to develop further opportunities for the children to engage in energetic play.

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

- The daily routines are well-established and are used appropriately to provide the children with choice and to promote their levels of independence.
- During the inspection, the quality of the staff's interaction with the children was consistently good and, in several instances, very good.
- There are good opportunities for the children to learn in most areas of the pre-school curriculum. The particular strengths of the programme are the promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development, language, and early mathematical concepts.

- The children's language and thinking skills are developing well through the skilful intervention of the staff. The children also benefit from the professional support given by the speech and language specialists provided through the SureStart programme.
- The planning and assessment methods are effective. The information gathered through the observation of the children's play and interaction is used increasingly to plan activities to meet the children's individual interests and learning needs.
- The Principal brings a high level of skill and enthusiasm to her work. Since her appointment, there have been significant improvements in the quality of the accommodation and resources in the nursery. The Principal acts as a very good role-model for the staff and provides effective leadership. There is an emerging sense of very good team-work among the dedicated staff.

7. The inspection identified areas for improvement. The following is the most important area that needs attention.

- To develop further the programme for outdoor play and to improve the associated resources.

8. The established culture of reflection and review is evident within the nursery staff's practice. This is exemplified in the comprehensive development plan that identifies appropriate targets for improvement; the latter aptly includes the further development of the outdoor play provision.

9. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the nursery school is good. The nursery has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the nursery has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the nursery's progress on the areas for improvement.

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