

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Eglinton Community
Pre-School, Co Londonderry

Report of an Inspection
in January 2012



STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of playgroup centre:	Eglinton Community Pre-School
Address:	Unit 4, Benbow Estate 15 Killylane Road EGLINTON Co Londonderry BT47 3DW
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	16 January 2012
Date of previous inspection:	9 November 2005

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the playgroup centre	22	-
in their immediate playgroup year	22	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	22	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	*	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	*	-
with English as an additional language	0	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
Attendance:		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	78.6%	-

* Denotes a figure fewer than five

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	0
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	3	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	2
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
2½ hours	-	188

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	22
Percentage returned	63.6%
Number of written comments:	9

**EGLINTON COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL, EGLINTON, CO LONDONDERRY BT47 3DW
(2AB-0051)**

1. Eglinton Community Pre-School is situated in purpose-built premises in the Benbow Estate.

2. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is very good; the quality of pastoral care is outstanding. The organisation is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

3. There is a settled, caring atmosphere in the centre. The children respond positively to the staff's clear expectations and display excellent behaviour; they are eager to explore new learning and make full use of the attractive and stimulating playroom. They are learning to share, to take turns, to make choices, to follow and lead in the play activities and to persevere with tasks. The children clearly enjoy the very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the curriculum and often engage in concentrated and productive play. They demonstrate a keen interest in learning about the world around them and can observe and talk about the local farm animals. The children's own art work is celebrated through attractive displays around the playroom.

4. The staff have worked hard to create a language rich environment which promotes effectively the children's language development. Themed books enhance areas of play and the children frequently browse through these. The children have a range of well-planned opportunities to mark make and to experiment with early writing using a very good range of tools. There are regular, informal story sessions with individuals and small groups. The majority of the children can talk about their experiences and express their thoughts and ideas confidently.

THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING

5. The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently very good and on occasions excellent. The staff often engage the children in purposeful discussions and develop their language through skilful questioning and through effective modelling of play. The thoughtful organisation of the daily timetable provides lengthy periods of free play and the necessary routines, such as snack and tidy up time, promote independence and confidence in the children. The routines are flexible and allow the children to make decisions and to complete tasks.

6. The staff have developed an appropriate method of planning which outlines variety, challenge and progression in the programme. Reflective evaluations are based on the children's responses and are used to inform future learning. The staff work very effectively as a team to ensure that the individual needs of all the children are met.

7. The parents are encouraged to become involved in the education of their children and the life of the centre in a variety of ways, for example, through informative newsletters and helping on outings with the children. Very good links have been established with the local community, including the primary schools to which the children will transfer.

8. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the centre is outstanding. The staff know all the children well and work hard to promote their well-being and independence. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to guide the staff in this aspect of their work.

9. The centre has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

10. The centre gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the well-planned snack routine and the regular opportunities for energetic outdoor play, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

11. The leader has been in post for twelve years and is an excellent role model for the staff. She has a clear vision for the development of the centre. She is well-supported by the deputy leader and the assistants who have a shared understanding of the aims of the centre. Their hard work and commitment to the development of the children contribute to the overall effectiveness of the centre.

12. The process of self-evaluation is developing very well and there is evidence that it has led to improvements in the quality of the provision. Appropriate priorities for improvement are clearly stated in the centre's development plan. The independent early years specialist, who has been working with the centre since September 2011, provides very good support and advice.

13. The key strengths of the centre include:

- the caring and inclusive ethos and the excellent behaviour of the children who display a very positive attitude to their learning;
- the breadth, balance and challenge provided in all areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- the quality of the interactions between the staff and the children which were consistently very good and at times excellent;
- the well-established, flexible routines which take account of the children's needs and choices;
- the very good cycle of observation and assessment which effectively informs planning; and
- the hard-working and committed leader and staff who work very well together as a team.

14. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is very good; the quality of pastoral care is outstanding. The organisation is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

QUESTIONNAIRES

The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Fourteen of the parents responded to the questionnaire and nine of these made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire were very positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the centre's work. The responses from the management group and the staff questionnaires were also very positive. The key messages from the responses have been shared with the staff and the representatives of the management committee.

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