

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

The Old Station Day Care
Nursery Playgroup, Dromore

Report of an Inspection
in October 2010

eti

*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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	The Old Station Day Care Nursery Playgroup
Address:	92 Church Street DROMORE Co Down BT25 1AA
Management Type:	Private

Date of inspection:	11 October 2010
Date of previous inspection:	23 November 2004

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	19	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	19	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	19	-
• 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:		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	91%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	3
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	3
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	2

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
3 hours	-	186

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	19
Percentage returned:	57.9%
Number of written comments:	1

THE OLD STATION DAY CARE NURSERY PLAYGROUP, DROMORE, CO DOWN, BT25 1AA (5CA-0501)

1. The Old Station Day Care Nursery Playgroup is situated on Church Road on the outskirts of Dromore, Co Down. Since the last inspection there have been changes in staffing; a new leader was appointed in September 2010.

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

CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

3. A caring ethos permeates the centre. The children are well settled and display exemplary behaviour and a positive attitude to learning. The majority of the children have good levels of concentration and engage in purposeful and productive play. They make independent choices, display a keen interest in the activities and listen attentively during group sessions. The attractively presented playrooms provide good, and on occasions excellent, opportunities for learning in most areas of the curriculum. The attention given to promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development and language development is a particular strength. There are limited opportunities for the development of the children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

4. Most of the children are articulate, engage readily with the staff and their peers and join in group discussions. During the inspection, a significant minority of the children browsed in the well stocked book area and explored and discussed items on the interest table with the staff. In addition to a large group story session the staff read stories to individual and small groups on request. Text is displayed appropriately around the room and the staff often write captions on the children's art work to reflect their thoughts and ideas.

THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING

5. The staff are patient and supportive in their work with the children. Throughout the session, there were many examples of good quality interaction from all of the staff; they use the time effectively to promote language and learning. The adults often join the children in their play and talk to them about their ideas, personal experiences and achievements. Necessary routines such as snack time are incorporated unobtrusively into the daily timetable and promote independence.

6. The staff have reviewed the planning format and incorporate themes and topics well to provide variety, challenge and progression in the programme. Aspects of the written planning need to be developed further to reflect accurately the learning to be promoted in the different areas of play and to take more account of the ability and needs of some of the children. The staff operate a key worker system to assist them in the monitoring and recording of the children's progress and development; the information collected is used well to inform learning and teaching. There are good opportunities throughout the year to share information about the children's progress with their parents.

7. Very good links have been established with the parents through, for example, the provision of an Open Day prior to the children starting the centre, a dedicated parents' notice board in the entrance area, monthly newsletters and regular meetings. There are limited links with the local primary schools.

8. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the centre is very good. 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 relevant Department.

10. The centre gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, however, the staff need to provide a more challenging range of resources for energetic physical play to ensure progression throughout the year.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

11. The leader demonstrates enthusiasm and commitment to her new role and is supported very well by her colleagues; together they have generated a good team-spirit and a diligent approach to their work.

12. The staff have made a useful start in the process of self-evaluation and there is some evidence that the process has led to improvements in the quality of the provision. The early year's specialist (EYS), from the Early Year's Organisation (EYO) was recently appointed to the centre and in this short period has provided very good advice and support to the staff.

13. The key strengths of the centre include:

- the very positive ethos and the exemplary behaviour of the children;
- the good, and on occasions, excellent, learning opportunities provided in all areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- the very good quality of the interaction between the staff and the children;
- the good use made of all time to promote learning;
- the appropriate methods of monitoring and recording the children's progress; and
- the good team-spirit among the staff and the diligent approach to their work.

14. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this centre is very good. The centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; 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. Eleven of the parents responded to the questionnaire and one made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire were very positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction with nearly all aspects of the centre's work including the helpful and friendly staff. The responses from the management group and the staff questionnaires were also very positive. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and the proprietor of the pre-school centre.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The toilet door leading to the children's toilet opens out onto the main corridor between two of the playrooms.

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