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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**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Area-Based Inspection**

### **First Steps Community Pre-School Ballymena**

**February 2009**

## **AREA-BASED INSPECTION - BALLYMENA AREA 2009: STRATEGIC PLANNING, COHERENCE IN LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an area-based inspection in First Steps Community Pre-School in St Joseph's Early Years Centre during February 2009.

### **The strengths include:**

- the very good strategic planning by the management group, working in conjunction with SureStart and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, to secure the future of pre-school education in the area, within the newly established St Joseph's Early Years Centre;
- the collaborative work undertaken to date with the other providers within St Joseph's Early Years Centre to ensure the very good use of the facilities and the resources;
- the good provision which promotes the development of the children's language and thinking skills; and
- the very good links with organisations in the local community.

### **The areas for improvement include the need to:**

- document and share with parents the procedures for managing the personal care of the children; and
- develop further the transition arrangements through the strengthening of the pastoral links with those primary schools to which the children will transfer, in order to ensure continuity and progression in the children's learning experiences.

While a few specific areas for improvement have been identified in this report, the composite report from the area-based inspection raises broader issues which need to be addressed by all of the schools and organisations visited. The District Inspector will visit the centre within six working weeks to monitor the arrangements for managing the personal care of the children.

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