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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

An Tearmann Early Years Project Coalisland

February 2008

REPORT OF A FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION IN AN TEARMANN EARLY YEARS PROJECT, COALISLAND, CO TYRONE, BT71 4PF (5AB-0337)

The inspection in March 2006 highlighted strengths in the quality of the learning environment and the links that had been established with the parents, and identified the need for improvement in the following key area:

- the management of the snack routine and the organisation of the latter part of the session to promote better opportunities for independence and learning.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the pre-school centre has taken place:

- a new leader and an assistant were appointed and took up post in September 2006;
- the staff have accessed training in the HighScope approach to delivering the pre-school curriculum;
- the centre has experienced several changes of early years specialist (EYS) support; a new HighScope EYS was appointed in January 2008; and
- a significant number of children in their penultimate pre-school year have been enrolled in the centre.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a series of inspection visits to the centre as part of the follow-up process. This report was compiled following the inspection visit on 21 February 2008 and also takes account of the findings of the visit in February 2007.

The pre-school centre drafted an appropriate action plan in light of the inspection findings.

The following are the most important improvements brought about by the staff and the management group.

- The staff have reviewed and improved the snack routine which now promotes the children's social skills and provides more opportunity to develop their independence.
- The staff have begun to evaluate different aspects of the play provision and have incorporated new culturally-appropriate resources.
- The leader has established good links with the centre's health visitor and the local SureStart programme, and also with the ToyBox project.
- The centre's EYS is providing well-focused advice and support.

The areas which need further improvement are:

- the story session and the activities at small group time need to be better matched to the children's needs and interests; and
- the staff should continue to develop the outside play space in order to provide a more stimulating and challenging range of learning experiences across the pre-school curriculum.

Since the inspection, the pre-school centre has evaluated the progress made in the area for improvement identified in the original inspection. The Inspectorate recommends that the centre develops further these processes for self-evaluation as a means to bring about the required improvement.

The follow-up inspection findings confirm that the pre-school centre has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but some areas for improvement remain to be addressed more rigorously.

The centre's progress in the continuing areas for improvement will be followed-up by the District Inspector.

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