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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

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Inchmarlo Playgroup
Belfast**

June 2009

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF INCHMARLO PLAYGROUP, BELFAST, CO ANTRIM, BT9 6JR (1BB-0554)

The original inspection in October 2008 highlighted strengths in the care of the staff and the good opportunities for the children to engage in physical play. The inspection also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the provision of an appropriate early years specialist to support the staff and raise the quality of the overall provision;
- the further development of the staff's skills in planning and assessment in order to implement a broad and balanced pre-school curriculum which meets the needs and interests of all of the children; and
- to improve the quality of the staff's interactions with the children to support the children's learning more effectively through the activities and daily routines.

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

- access to the building in which the playgroup is accommodated is secure;
- the child protection policies and procedures have been updated and shared with the parents;
- an early years specialist has been appointed;
- additional resources have been purchased; and
- the staff have attended a range of relevant training.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a follow-up inspection on 8 June 2009.

The action plan produced by the playgroup in response to the inspection findings identified the key issues needing to be addressed and the actions to be taken. The quality of support provided by the early years specialist has been satisfactory; there have been strengths in the guidance and support but the high turnover of early years specialist personnel since the original inspection has impeded the rate of progress being made in some of the areas for improvement.

Good progress has been made in most of the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection.

The following are the most important improvements since the inspection:

- the learning environment provides more clearly defined and more stimulating and richly resourced areas for play, resulting in greater choice and autonomy in the children's learning;

- the staff's interaction with the children is more effective in promoting the children's language and thinking;
- there are better opportunities for the children to learn in all areas of the pre-school curriculum; in particular the children's own creative ideas, their motivation and concentration and early mathematical language and ideas;
- the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection are comprehensive; and
- there are more effective arrangements in place for the early identification and support of children with additional needs.

The areas which need further improvement are:

- to continue to develop a systematic and effective approach to recording and using information on the children's progress to plan for individual needs and interests, inform parents and to ensure a smooth transition into primary school;
- to develop the written planning to ensure progression in the children's learning.

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision.

The pre-school centre has demonstrated evidence of improvement but areas for improvement in learning and teaching remain to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor the pre-school centre's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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