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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Laurencetown Playgroup
Gilford, Co Armagh**

February 2008

REPORT OF A FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION IN LAURENCETOWN PLAYGROUP, GILFORD, CO ARMAGH, BT63 6DU (5AB-0234)

The inspection in November 2005 highlighted strengths in the centre's ethos, the good links with the parents and the good opportunities for learning in most aspects of the pre-school curriculum. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the need to identify more clearly the learning to be promoted in all areas of play in order to guide the staff more effectively in their day-to-day work with the children; and
- to improve the procedures for assessing the children's progress and development and use the information more effectively to inform the planning.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the pre-school centre have taken place:

- a new leader was appointed and took up post in August 2006, and two new members of staff have also been appointed;
- the management group provided the staff with some additional time to work on the areas for improvement; and
- some additional resources have been purchased for the playroom and outdoor play area.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out an inspection visit 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 November 2007.

The pre-school centre does not have a development plan.

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

- The written planning is detailed and outlines a broad and balanced programme for the children that progresses steadily throughout the year. It identifies many aspects of learning to be promoted through the various play activities and is effective in guiding the staff in their day-to-day work with the children.
- The staff have developed a comprehensive system for observing, recording and reporting on the children's progress and development. Detailed records are kept on each child and the information gathered is used to inform the planning, and is shared with the parents throughout the year. A pre-school transition form is also completed and is shared with the primary school which the children will attend.
- The staff are aware of the learning difficulties experienced by some of the children and provide appropriate support to meet individual needs. They liaise with the parents and support agencies on a regular basis.

- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently of a high standard. The staff use every opportunity to promote language and learning and to promote the children's sustained involvement in the activities. The children's own ideas are often noted and carefully incorporated into the programme.
- The leader is enthusiastic in her approach and effective in her work. She is ably supported by the hard-working and dedicated staff.

Since the inspection, the pre-school centre has evaluated the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection.

The promotion of a self-evaluative culture throughout the follow-up inspection period contributed significantly to the improvement made, and helped the pre-school centre identify appropriately its priorities for future development.

Excellent progress has been made in the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection. The educational and pastoral needs of the children are well met. The parents and broader community can have confidence in the effectiveness of the pre-school centre's response to the findings of the inspection and its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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