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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

Ligoniel Pre-School
Belfast

January 2008

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION IN LIGONIEL PRE-SCHOOL, LIGONIEL FAMILY CENTRE, BELFAST, BT14 8PT (1AB-0308)

The inspection in June 2007 highlighted strengths in some aspects of the children's play and also identified the need for major improvement in the following key areas:

- the effectiveness of the staff interaction to promote learning, language and thinking through the play activities;
- planning for a more enriching pre-school curriculum; and
- the development of assessment methods to match the programme to the children's needs and stage of development; and
- the child protection policies and procedures need to be updated and shared with the parents.

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

- the access to the building through the front door is now controlled by the staff;
- the child protection policies have been reviewed and updated;
- the building has been renovated to provide access to the children's toilets directly from the playroom;
- an early years specialist has been employed and has started some initial developmental work; and
- a new member of staff is working in the pre-school room.

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 10 January 2008 and also takes account of the findings of the visit in September 2007.

The pre-school centre does not have a development plan. It is in the early stages of developing some relevant action plans.

The following improvements have been brought about by the staff:

- the child protection policies are now comprehensive and are displayed for the parents;
- the staff are more alert to the security and control of the entrance area;
- the creative, sand and water areas are more richly resourced;
- the recently appointed early years specialist is giving relevant and well focused guidance; and
- there is an increased emphasis on the promotion of early maths and creativity.

Although there have been some improvements, the evidence from the follow-up procedures indicate that insufficient progress has been made in addressing many of the areas identified for action by the original inspection. The following key areas have been inadequately addressed:

- the further training and development needed by staff to support more effectively the children in their learning, be more aware of Health and Safety issues within the playroom and promote productive play;
- the development of the planning and assessment methods to provide a rich pre-school programme which matches the needs and interests of the children;
- more collaborative work by the leader, the early years specialist and the management group to provide the leadership required to bring about the necessary improvements.

Since the inspection, the pre-school centre has not evaluated effectively the progress made since the original inspection. Substantial areas for improvement identified in the original inspection remain to be addressed urgently if the pre-school is to meet effectively the needs of all the children.

The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the pre-school centres progress in addressing these areas for improvement. A further follow-up inspection will be carried out before the end of June 2008.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The storage of some play equipment on high shelves within the playroom is unsafe.
- Very hot food was carried across children's heads in the playroom.
- Children were observed not washing their hands after attending the toilet.

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