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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**

**Portglenone Community Playgroup  
Co Antrim**

**November 2008**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF PORTGLENONE COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, CO ANTRIM (3AB-0253)**

The inspection in January 2007 highlighted strengths in the caring and friendly atmosphere, the inviting environment and the confident and articulate children. It identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the layout and organisation of the playroom;
- the organisation of the daily routine;
- the effectiveness of the staff interaction; and
- the planning and assessment methods.

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

- there have been a number of staff changes; a new leader and deputy leader took up appointment during September 2008 and a third member of staff with a childcare degree also took up post in September 2008;
- a new management committee has been established;
- additional materials and resources have been purchased and added to provide greater choice of physical play opportunities;
- the staff have attended some relevant training in child protection, special educational needs (SEN) and food hygiene;
- the length of the session has been adjusted to provide staff time for planning and assessment;
- the organisation of the daily routines has been changed; and
- the layout of the playroom has been re-organised.

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 28 November 2008 and also takes account of the findings of the visit in February 2008.

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

- the staff have reviewed and improved the organisation of the session. The children are more independent at snack time and are involved more fully with returning their activities and materials after play. The routines of the day effectively support the children's sense of responsibility for the centre;
- the physical play experiences now occur at the top of the hall, activities are now effectively organised into an appropriate programme and better use is made of all the space;
- the staff demonstrate a greater understanding and skill in promoting purposeful and sustained play. They have begun to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme in a systematic manner;

- the monthly planning includes more detail and highlights the learning potential within each area of play. The plans are now displayed in the playroom and provide useful guidance for the staff. They have been modified to take account of the children's responses and to provide additional challenge;
- there are daily opportunities for the children to enjoy large group stories, circle time and physical play sessions; and
- the additional resources and revised layout of the playroom enhance the quality of the learning environment and the range of learning experiences for the children.

**The area which needs further improvement is:**

- the staff should develop further their assessment methods in order to ensure that adequate and accurate information is recorded on each child's progress in all six areas of the programme.

The pre-school centre has a development plan. It has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The leader and the centre's early years specialist have identified appropriate areas for continued improvement.

Since the inspection, the pre-school has evaluated the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. The Inspectorate recommends that the processes for self-evaluation are developed to focus more strongly on self-evaluation as a means to bring about improvement.

Good progress has been made in most of the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is now good. The pre-school centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the areas for improvement still to be addressed but equally the pre-school centre has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

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