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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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Sunnylands Nursery School
Carrickfergus**

April 2010

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF SUNNYLANDS NURSERY SCHOOL, CARRICKFERGUS, CO ANTRIM, BT38 8JJ (311-6150)

The inspection in May 2007 highlighted strengths in the bright and attractive learning environment both indoors and outdoors, the organisation of the sessions and the good relationships developed between the staff and the children. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the methods used to record the children's individual progress;
- the development of the planning to improve aspects of the curriculum; and
- the consistency of the staff's interactions with the children.

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

- the staff have attended some relevant training in planning, assessment, the pre-school curriculum areas and staff interaction;
- a major refurbishment of the premises has been carried out;
- additional resources have been acquired for physical play, music, creative play and language development;
- the staff have formalised opportunities for the staff to plan and evaluate together and to report to the parents on the children's progress;
- the layout of the quiet rooms and the covered verandah has been reorganised; and
- the planning and assessment methods have been reviewed and appropriately adapted.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out one interim follow-up inspection visit in June 2009 and a follow-up inspection on 28 April 2010.

The action plan produced by the nursery school in response to the inspection findings was of a very good quality.

The nursery school has a development plan which has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The development plan meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education.

The following are the most important improvements since the inspection:

- the quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is now of a consistently higher quality;
- the refurbishment provides a more attractive, welcoming and purposeful learning environment for the children and the staff, the layout of the veranda and the quiet rooms promotes more productive and safe play;

- the monthly planning includes relevant detail and highlights the learning potential within each area of play, taking greater account of the opportunities to develop children's use of books, early marking, musical experiences and physical play experiences;
- the children's progress and development is recorded more effectively, is used to inform the planning and the staff report to the parents on the children's progress on three occasions each year;
- effective links have been established with the local SureStart speech and language therapist and with the local primary schools; and
- a culture of self-evaluation exists within the school which has enabled the staff to demonstrate clear evidence of improvement.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is now very good. The nursery school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrate its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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