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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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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 an Inspection

Bangor Abbey Pre-School Centre
Co Down

Inspected: February 2009

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Bangor Abbey Pre-school Centre
Address:	1a Abbey Street BANGOR Co Down BT20 4JE
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	26 February 2009
Date of previous inspection:	13 February 2003

1. Details of Children

	am session	pm session
Total number of children:		
• attending the pre-school centre	35	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	15	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	14	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	0	-
• with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	-
• with English as an additional language	0	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
Attendance:		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	87%	-

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	5
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	4
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	2

Number of: **	
Students	0
Trainees	0

** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session	Number of days open in previous year
3 hours	N/A	188

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	34
Percentage returned:	59%
Number of written comments:	6

**BANGOR ABBEY PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE, BANGOR, CO DOWN, BT20 4JE
(4AB-0472)**

INSPECTED: 26 FEBRUARY 2009

1. The pre-school centre is situated in the grounds of Bangor Abbey. Since the last inspection, a new leader and, more recently, two new assistants have been appointed. The children attending the pre-school centre come from the local area.

2. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the management group and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. A majority of the parents responded to the questionnaire and six made additional written comments. The responses from the parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision and they appreciate the helpful, friendly and caring staff. The responses from the management group and the staff were also very positive and supportive of the work of the pre-school centre. All of the responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection and were shared with the staff and management group. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the welfare of the children. The working relationships at all levels are good and there are close links with the parents.

3. The pre-school centre has very good arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

4. The pre-school centre gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, which encourage the children to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

5. The main strengths within the pre-school centre's educational and pastoral provision are as follows.

- There is a caring and supportive atmosphere in the pre-school centre which helps to promote the children's confidence, independence and self-esteem. The children's behaviour is good; their play is settled and purposeful. The staff work very hard each day to create an inviting learning environment for the children; good use is made of a wide range of the children's art work, posters and interest areas to create colourful displays around the room.
- The thoughtful organisation of the daily timetable allows the day to flow smoothly and provides a valuable period of uninterrupted play when the children can choose freely, and develop their concentration in, their chosen activities. The children's snack is organised informally and provides opportunities for the children to develop social and conversational skills.
- The staff provide the children with sustained support during the free play session; their interaction and involvement with the children is of a high quality. The staff often engage the children in purposeful discussions about their play and experiences.

- The activities on offer provide an interesting range of play experiences for the children and opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development, early language and mathematical skills are key strengths of the educational programme. The children are well settled and many engage in lengthy periods of concentrated play.
- There is a sense of team-spirit among the hard-working staff; they co-operate effectively in the day-to-day running of the pre-school centre. The staff display commitment to the pre-school centre and the children.

6. The inspection identified areas for improvement. The following are the most important areas that need attention.

- To continue to develop the planning to ensure progression in the children's learning and use the information from the observations of the children's play to meet more effectively their differing needs.

7. The staff have developed some useful methods of self-evaluation. The early years specialist has made a good contribution to the overall development of the provision in this pre-school centre. The support provided is well focused, in particular she has worked with the staff to bring about improvements in the learning environment and in the implementation of the pre-school centre's behaviour management strategies.

8. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the pre-school centre is good. The pre-school centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the pre-school centre has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the pre-school centre's progress on the areas for improvement.

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