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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 an Inspection

**Cookstown Nursery School
Co Tyrone**

Inspected: March 2009

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON COOKSTOWN NURSERY SCHOOL

1. Details of Children

| Number of children: | Class 1 | Class 2 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Attending full-time | 28 | 26 |
| Attending part-time | 0 | 0 |
| Under 3 years of age* | 0 | 0 |
| With statement of special educational needs | 2 | 0 |
| At CoP stages 3 or 4** | 2 | 2 |
| At CoP stages 1 or 2** | 2 | 1 |
| With English as an additional language | 1 | 0 |

* On 1 July.

** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of special educational needs.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2. | 15% |
| Average attendance for the previous year. | 91% |

2. Duration of Sessions

| Full-time | Part-time: am | Part-time: pm |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 4¾ hours | - | - |

3. Details of Staff

| Number of: | Full-Time | Part-Time |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Teachers | 2 | 0 |
| Nursery Assistants | 2 | 2 |
| Qualified Nursery Assistants | 1 | 2 |

| Number of: *** | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Students | 0 |
| Trainees | 0 |

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires (to be completed by Inspection Services Branch)

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Number issued | 53 |
| Percentage returned | 66% |
| Number of written comments | 13 |

COOKSTOWN NURSERY SCHOOL, CO TYRONE, BT80 8PF (511-6237)
INSPECTED: 11 MARCH 2009

1. Cookstown Nursery School is situated in the Coolnafranky Demesne. It shares the same campus as the local primary and post-primary schools. Most of the children who attend the nursery come from the immediate Cookstown area. There are currently 54 children attending the nursery; seven children have been identified as having additional needs.

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 13 made additional written comments. The responses from all of the parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision. They are all very appreciative of:

- the welcoming, caring ethos in the nursery; and
- the friendly and very professional staff who know the children well and are highly supportive of them.

The responses from the management group and the staff were also very positive and supportive of the work of the nursery. In particular the management group paid tribute to the hard-working Principal and staff and their dedication to the welfare and development of the children. They also recorded their appreciation of how they are kept informed of all developments within the nursery. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection and were shared with the staff and management group.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the nursery is very good. The staff work well together as a team and demonstrate a strong commitment to meeting the needs of all of the children. The working relationships at all levels are very good and there are effective links with the parents, local schools and appropriate support agencies.

4. The nursery has very good arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

5. The nursery gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. There is an effective healthy break policy and there are regular opportunities for energetic outdoor play, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

6. The main strengths within the nursery school's educational and pastoral provision are as follows.

- The caring, supportive ethos which effectively promotes the children's independence and self-esteem, and the bright spacious environment.
- The very good behaviour of most of the children; there were many examples of sustained, purposeful play. The children are articulate, confident and they work well together.

- The good learning opportunities in most aspects of the pre-school curriculum. The promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength of the provision.
- There is very good provision for the children with special educational needs; appropriate education plans are implemented and regularly reviewed. The staff provide very good levels of support and the parents are kept fully informed of their children's programmes and development. The teachers' observations indicate that these children are making good progress.
- The effective interaction by the majority of the staff in building on the children's interests, in extending their language and promoting the development of their concentration skills.
- The very good written planning which guides the staff's day-to-day work with the children; the regular evaluations of the planning are used effectively to inform future practice.

7. The inspection identified the following area for development:

- to further develop the process for self-evaluation and to link it more strategically to the identification of the priorities for the continued development of the nursery.

8. The nursery has an outline development plan which indicates the areas for improvement over a three year period. There is an evolving culture of self-evaluation.

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

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Some of the fixed equipment in the outdoor play area is not appropriate to the children's age and stage of physical development. It poses a potential danger for the children and necessitates full-time supervision by a member of the staff.

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