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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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

**Covenant Christian Playgroup
Newtownabbey**

Inspected: October 2007

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Covenant Christian Playgroup
Address:	Rushpark Community Centre Bracken Drive NEWTOWNABBEY Co Antrim BT37 9PR
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	22 October 2007
Date of previous inspection:	27 November 2003

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	24	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	13	-
• funded by Department of Education	13	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	-
• with a statement of SEN*	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for SEN	0	-
• 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	95%	-

* Special Educational Needs

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	1
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	3	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	1
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	-	184

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	24
Percentage returned:	62.5%
Number of written comments:	6

**COVENANT CHRISTIAN PLAYGROUP, NEWTOWNABBEY, CO ANTRIM,
BT37 9PR (3AA-0113)**

1. The centre is situated in the local community centre. The premises are shared with a number of other organisations. The children come from a wide surrounding area.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the centre through the inspection questionnaires. Those who responded expressed a high level of satisfaction with the overall provision. The small number of minor issues raised have been shared with the staff.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection in the school has some strengths. The pre-school centre has some appropriate policies and procedures for child protection. The inspection evidence indicates that some additions are needed to ensure they are fully comprehensive.

4. The pre-school's programme for the promotion of health and well-being has a few strengths. The children are encouraged to eat a healthy break and are provided with regular opportunities to be physically active.

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

- The children appear content and are well settled. They are developing effectively their social skills.
- The staff work hard to set out a wide choice of activities on a daily basis and enhance the playroom with attractive displays of photographs and the children's own art work.
- The range of activities provided offers satisfactory opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. On the day of the inspection, the pre-school children demonstrated good levels of concentration and independence. There were good examples of co-operative play in the home area and a high level of interest in modelling dough, the creative area and the table-top toys.
- The children listen attentively to the enjoyable large group story and music session.
- The leader is developing useful links with the local college.

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

- The staff need to develop their confidence and skill in collating and using information on the children's progress to tailor the planning and match the adult support more closely to the individual children's needs and abilities.

- The staff's interactions with the children needs to give more emphasis to promoting the children's thinking and problem-solving skills and build more consistently on the children's own capabilities and ideas.
- Review the organisation of the daily routines to place a greater emphasis on using them as an opportunity to promote learning, independence and parental involvement.

7. The contribution by the centres early years specialist has some strengths including the identification of some appropriate areas for development. The staff need to work closely with their early years specialist to draw up and implement specific action plans to address the key areas for improvement.

8. The pre-school centre has strengths in many aspects of its educational provision. The inspection has identified a few areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed to meet effectively the needs of all the children.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the pre-school centre's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

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