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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
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**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**

### **Derry Travellers' Support Group**

**Inspected: February 2009**

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school centre:</b>	Derry Travellers' Support Group
<b>Address:</b>	141 Racecourse Road Ballyarnett Park DERRY BT48 8NG
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	17 February 2009
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	6 March 2003

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
• attending the pre-school centre	7	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	2	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	2	-
• 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	-
<b>Attendance:</b>		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	65%	-

\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff, including leader	2	0
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	2	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

<b>Number of: **</b>	
Students	0
Trainees	0

\*\* Total placements since September of current year

## 3. Details of Sessions

<b>Duration of morning session</b>	<b>Duration of afternoon session</b>	<b>Number of days open in previous year</b>
2½ hours	N/A	167

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	6
Percentage returned:	67%
Number of written comments:	1

## **DERRY TRAVELLERS' SUPPORT GROUP, BT48 8NG (2AB-0461)**

1. Derry Travellers' Support Group is a pre-school centre which serves the needs of the travelling community. Since the last inspection a new leader and an assistant have been appointed. There are currently seven children attending the pre-school centre, and two of them are in their pre-school year.

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 one parent made additional comments. The responses from the parental questionnaires indicated that the parents regard the pre-school centre highly and they appreciate:

- the wide range of activities available;
- the happy, settled atmosphere;
- the support and care provided for the children; and
- the helpful information provided about their children's progress.

The responses from the staff were also wholly positive; the management group highlighted the dedication and hard work of the staff and the positive working relationships at all levels. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection process and shared with the leader and management group.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the pre-school centre is very good. Among the strengths are the inclusive and supportive ethos, the enthusiastic and caring staff and the value placed on working as a team.

4. The pre-school centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments, but the following minor area needs to be addressed:

- to update the training for a designated member of the management group in child protection matters.

5. The pre-school centre gives good attention to promoting healthy eating, for example, the children have a daily buffet snack. The pre-school centre needs to further develop the outdoor play provision to provide more challenging physical opportunities for the children.

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

- The stimulating and inviting learning environment which includes a good range of resources which are carefully maintained and accessible to the children.

- The staff interact effectively with the children and, in particular, support the development of language and promote to good effect their personal, social and emotional skills. There is also an appropriate emphasis on encouraging equality and diversity including an appreciation by the staff of the need to develop the children's own cultural awareness.
- The staff have benefited from the recent cluster training provided on supporting children with additional needs and they make good efforts to identify and support the children with some aspects of their learning.
- The daily timetable is well organised and provides a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff. It is timely that the management group are reviewing the optimal operating times so that all of the children benefit fully from the programme on offer.
- The hard-working, dedicated and enthusiastic leader and assistant who are supported effectively by the management group.
- The effective arrangements in place to encourage the involvement of parents in the life and work of the pre-school centre, and the developing links established with the primary school to which most of the children will transfer, the local Sure Start provider and the involvement of outside agencies to support the children's learning.

7. The inspection identified the following area for improvement.

- The staff need to further develop their planning and assessment methods in order to demonstrate how the children's learning develops over time, to ensure that differing needs are met effectively, and to provide evidence of adequate challenge and progression throughout the year.

8. The early years specialist (EYS) has made a very good contribution to the overall development of the provision in the pre-school centre. The support provided is well focused and includes the re-organisation of the playroom and daily timetable, the development of short- and medium-term planning, encouraging effective links with parents and promoting effective transition arrangements. The staff have started to develop some useful methods of self-evaluation. Although the work is at an early stage, some progress has been made in reviewing the development of language through the re-organisation and the resourcing of the story area. It will be important for the staff and management group to work with the early years specialist (EYS) to build upon the good start made to the arrangements for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

9. 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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