

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Kilkeel Nursery School,
Co Down

Report of an Inspection
in February 2013

CONTENTS

Section		Page
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Inspection methods and evidence base	1
3.	Overall finding of the inspection	1
4.	Children's achievements	1
5.	Provision for learning	2
6.	Leadership and management	2
	Appendix – Health and safety	

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON KILKEEL NURSERY SCHOOL

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	29	
Attending part-time		52
Under 3 years of age*		
With statement of SEN**	2	3
At CoP stages 3 or 4***	2	2
At CoP stages 1 or 2***		
With English as an additional language	2	1

* On 1 July.

** Special Educational Needs.

*** 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.	17
Average attendance for the previous year.	90%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4½ hours	2½ hours	2½ hours

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	
Nursery Assistants	5	
Qualified Nursery Assistants	5	

Number of: ****	
Students	1
Trainees	1

**** Total placements since September of current year

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

Number issued	80
Percentage returned	30%
Number of written comments	12

1. Introduction

Kilkeel Nursery School is located on the Harbour Road, Kilkeel, Newry, County Down.

2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations and from the scrutiny of a range of relevant documentation provided by the nursery school.

The views of the parents, staff, and governors were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Seventy eight questionnaires were issued to the parents and 31% were returned, twelve with written comments. All of the staff completed their questionnaires, seven included written comments. A small number of the governors also returned their questionnaires. Most of the responses received were positive about nearly all aspects of the nursery school's work. The parents praised the hard-working and dedicated staff; all of the staff indicated that they enjoy working with the children and the governors indicated that they are highly satisfied with the school's work. All of the comments, including the few concerns raised through the questionnaires have been shared with the principal and the chairperson of the governors.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the nursery school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified minor areas for improvement which the nursery school has the capacity to address.

The nursery school's progress on the areas for improvement will be followed-up by monitoring visits.

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements	Good
Quality of Provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's achievements

The quality of the children's achievements is good.

- Most of the children are well-settled and they engage in purposeful play.
- During the inspection, the staff use appropriate mathematical language and many of the children were able to count, match sort and use positional language naturally when participating in a range of activities.
- Most of the children listen attentively during the group story sessions and join in enthusiastically with the songs and rhymes.

- While most of the children are able to attend to their own needs and make independent choices more use should be made of the daily routines to develop further the children's independence and learning.

5. Provision for learning

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

- The playrooms and the outdoor learning environment are arranged to provide distinct areas for aspects of play. The range of activities is often inviting, stimulating and challenging for young children and is enhanced with interesting materials, displays of the children's art work and books. The organisation of some of the activities and the high number of adults within both playrooms limit the space available for the children to extend their activities. The staff should review the use of all the space available within the nursery school to maximise the opportunities for the children to extend their activities using a wider range of materials and to provide more opportunities for all of the staff and children to work with one another. Friendly, informal relationships have been established between the staff and the parents.
- The staff should review the organisation of the day to ensure that the children in the part-time sessions have the appropriate length of time for learning and that the staff have a mid-day break and sufficient preparation time for the next part-time session.
- There are good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum; the development of the children's language and their understanding of positional language and early mathematical concepts are particular strengths of the nursery school's provision.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the nursery school is good. The children are at ease with the staff and often turn to them for help and to join in their play.
- The nursery school gives satisfactory attention to promoting healthy eating. The nursery staff should review the range of food and drinks on offer to the children to ensure they are provided with appropriate healthy drinks and options. The staff should review the organisation of the snack and dinner routines to engage the children more fully in making healthy choices and to maximise the learning opportunities inherent in the routines.

6. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is good

- The Principal is well-organised, and has demonstrated her commitment to the ongoing improvement of the nursery school's provision through the self-evaluation process. There is a need, however, for all of the staff to work together and develop a more collegial approach to the development of all aspects of the nursery school's work in the best interest of the children.

- There are effective links established with the parents, local primary school and outside agencies. The parents are kept informed about events within the nursery school through information on the parents' notice board and through an informative newsletter. They also receive information about their child's progress through informal meetings and through written reports.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the nursery school has very good comprehensive arrangements for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the nursery school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the nursery school has the capacity to address. The nursery school's progress on the areas for improvement will be followed-up by monitoring visits.

The areas for improvement include the need to:

- review the organisation of the day to make more effective use of all time for learning and ensure that the part-time sessions are of an appropriate length and the staff have a mid-day break and sufficient time for preparation; and
- develop a more collegial approach to the development of all aspects of the nursery school's work in the best interest of the children.

Health and safety

- The foyer and classrooms are crowded during the periods that the children are being collected. The main doors require close monitoring by the staff to ensure that no child leaves the school without adult supervision.

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