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## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of an Inspection**

**Malone Nursery School  
Belfast**

**Inspected: October 2007**

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school centre:	Malone Nursery School
Address:	Simply Me Early Years Centre Kings Hall Complex Lisburn Road Balmoral BELFAST BT9 6GW
Management Type:	Private

Date of inspection:	24 October 2007
Date of previous inspection:	13 November 2002

### 1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
• attending the pre-school centre	60	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	32	-
• funded by Department of Education	32	-
• 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	2	-
• with English as an additional language	2	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	1	-
Attendance:		
• attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	90%	-

\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	8	1
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	8	1
New appointments within previous 12 months	3	0

Number of: **	
Students	3
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
3¾ hours	-	190

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	26
Number returned:	38.5%
Number of written comments:	5

## **MALONE NURSERY SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT9 6GW (1AB-0423)**

1. The centre is situated in the Kings Hall Complex. Since the last inspection the number of funded pre-school places has increased and as a result additional staff have been employed.

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

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection has some strengths. The pre-school centre has some appropriate policies and procedures for child protection, and these need to be shared more fully with the parents. Some amendments are needed to ensure they are sufficiently detailed.

4. The centre's programme for the promotion of health and well-being has strengths, with a developing commitment to encourage the children to eat healthily and be physically active.

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

- The good relationships between the children and the staff. The children are settled and generally well-behaved; they are developing appropriately their social skills.
- The bright playrooms which are laid out into distinct areas for play. They are enhanced with displays of the children's own art work.
- The lengthy period of free play when the children explore the range of activities available.
- The caring and supportive staff who often engage in useful discussions with the children about their play and experiences. They are hard-working and committed to the welfare of the children.
- The interesting and varied programme of activities which provide satisfactory opportunities for the children to learn in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. On the day of the inspection, many of the children displayed good levels of independent and co-operative play. The children demonstrate an interest in books, stories and early mark-making. Concentrated and productive play was observed in the role-play area, puzzles and the creative area within the nursery class.
- The valuable links developed with the parents and it is appropriate that the staff plan to develop these further.

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

- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children needs to be more consistently of a high standard, in particular, to promote the children's thinking skills, creativity and ability to problem-solve.
- The planning needs to be developed to ensure that all of the pre-school children benefit from a sufficiently challenging pre-school curriculum, with more emphasis on the children's own investigation and, exploration. It needs to guide all of the staff more effectively in their day-to-day work.
- The staff need to ensure that all curricular information and documentation is accurate, in line with Department of Education guidance for pre-school education and adhered to.

7. The staff regularly evaluate aspects of their weekly programme and reflect on their work. The centre is at an early stage of developing a systematic approach to self-evaluation in order to bring about continuous improvement in the quality of the teaching and learning. The development plan for the centre, which highlights some appropriate areas for improvement, should now be amended to incorporate the inspection findings.

The leader is also the early years specialist (EYS) for the centre. The EYS support needs to be more focused on the areas identified through the inspection to bring about the necessary improvements. It is recommended that stronger links are made with other appropriate pre-school settings and relevant organisations to effectively support the improvements which are required.

8. The pre-school centre has strengths in many aspects of its educational and pastoral 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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