

*eti*

*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**

### **Muckamore Pre-School Antrim**

**Inspected: February 2009**

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school centre:</b>	Muckamore Pre-School
<b>Address:</b>	Muckamore Community Centre 4 Ballycraigy Road ANTRIM BT41 1PH
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	17 February 2009
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	5 February 2004

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
• attending the pre-school centre	26	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	26	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	26	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	4	-
• 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	1	-
• 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	90%	-

\* 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	0	4
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	4
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	1

<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	-	190

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	26
Percentage returned:	50%
Number of written comments:	5

## **MUCKAMORE PRE-SCHOOL, ANTRIM, BT41 1PH (3AB-0117)**

1. The pre-school centre is situated in Muckamore Community Centre which is owned and maintained by Antrim Borough Council. The pre-school centre also has the use of a large hall and has access to a council owned play park close by. Since the last inspection, the staff have developed a small garden area and the outdoor play area has been resurfaced. A new early years specialist (EYS) was appointed in September 2007 and an additional member of staff took up post in November 2008.

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 five made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire indicated that almost all the parents regard the pre-school centre very highly and appreciate that the staff are concerned for the well-being of the children, the children take part in a wide range of activities and the pre-school centre is well thought of in the community. The responses from the management group and the staff questionnaires were wholly positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the pre-school centre. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and management of the pre-school centre.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the pre-school centre is very good. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, the ethos is very positive and relationships at all levels are very good. The staff have high expectations of the children and the atmosphere is one of mutual respect; the children are settled, confident and happy, and their behaviour is very good.

4. The pre-school centre has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding the children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

5. The pre-school centre gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The pre-school centre is involved in the “Boost Better Breaks” scheme, and there are daily opportunities for energetic physical play, either indoors or in the outdoor play spaces. Appropriate programmes have been developed which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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

- The staff work hard to create a very attractive and stimulating learning environment within the playroom. The children’s work is very carefully presented, displays are eye-catching and the accommodation is used effectively to create exciting interest areas, space for large creative play and a quiet room for reading, listening and games. Resources are carefully labelled, easily accessed and offer children choice and variety.
- The daily session is very well-organised and provides a lengthy period of uninterrupted play, balanced with activities led by the staff. The routines and transitions are well managed and the children have daily opportunities for stories, rhymes and songs.

- The quality of the staff's interactions with the children is of a very high standard. The adults engage purposefully with the children, listening to them and building effectively on their ideas. They carefully exploit the learning potential within the activities and the environment and are very skilful in helping the children make connections in their learning.
- The children enjoy their play and show sustained interest in the broad range of activities provided. Their language skills are well developed and they display high levels of confidence and independence.
- There are very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Early mathematical concepts are developed very naturally and the children show a strong interest in early reading and writing. During the inspection, many children showed high levels of engagement in imaginative and dramatic role-play.
- The staff work hard to develop the children's understanding of their role in caring for and sustaining the environment. The pre-school centre has achieved an ECO-Schools award and the children and parents are involved in recycling schemes and developing the garden area.

7. The leader manages the pre-school centre very effectively and there is a strong sense of team-spirit among the very experienced staff. They have a good understanding of the pre-school curriculum and of how young children learn and develop. They reflect regularly on their practice and are committed to ongoing improvement in areas such as planning, assessment and transition links with the primary schools to which the children transfer. The contribution made by the pre-school centre's EYS to date has strengths, including recent guidance on supporting children with special educational needs. The EYS should now work with the staff and the management group to help them identify their priorities for action over the next planning period, and they should use this process of development planning more systematically to monitor and evaluate improvement in provision and outcomes for the children.

8. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school centre is very good. The pre-school centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2009

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the DE website: [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk) or may be obtained from the Inspection Services Branch, Department of Education, Rathgael House, 43 Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down BT19 7PR.