

*eti*

*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**

**Play-A-Way Childcare Centre  
Newtownards**

**Inspected: February 2008**

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school centre:</b>	Play-A-Way Childcare Centre
<b>Address:</b>	Zion Hall Zion Place NEWTOWNARDS Co Down BT23 7ER
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	5 February 2008
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	21 January 2003

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
• attending the pre-school centre	30	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	20	-
• funded by Department of Education	20	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	-
• 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>		-
• percentage attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	93%	-

\* 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	5
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	0	5
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

<b>Number of: **</b>	
Students	3
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>
3 hours	-	189

### 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	20
Percentage returned:	65%
Number of written comments:	7

**PLAY-A-WAY CHILDCARE CENTRE, NEWTOWNARDS, CO DOWN, BT23 7ER  
(4AB-0440)**

1. The centre is situated in Zion Hall, Zion Place, Newtownards. The children come mainly from the local area. Since the last inspection the centre has accessed funding to provide a secure outdoor play area.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given opportunities to express their views about the centre through the inspection questionnaires. All of those who responded expressed a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the centre's work. The responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection is very good. The pre-school centre has appropriate policies and procedures for child protection. The inspection evidence indicates that the staff implement these policies and procedures effectively and consistently to safeguard the children.

4. The pre-school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, and has effective policies and programmes in place to encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

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

- The centre's positive ethos promotes effectively the children's confidence and self-esteem. Relationships between the staff and the children are very good. The staff provide a high level of reassurance and support. The children are settled and well behaved. The centre's staff have established very good communication and links with the parents, outside agencies and local schools.
- The staff are caring and supportive; their sustained involvement in the activities fosters successfully the children's settled and productive play. They often introduce new vocabulary as they engage the children in valuable discussion about their play and experiences. During the inspection, there were many examples of skilful interaction between the staff and the children, which challenged and extended the children's thinking.
- The centre's programme provides good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum; particular strengths of the programme include the attention given to the promotion of early mathematical awareness, language development and the World Around Us.
- The centre has an effective administrator who oversees the organisation of the centre's work. Within the playroom the leader brings a high level of enthusiasm to her work; she provides effective leadership for the hard-working and committed staff.

- The staff make good efforts to support, identify and address the difficulties experienced by some children with their learning. There is effective liaison with the parents and other professionals. The staff are sensitive to the children's needs; they have drawn up appropriate education plans which are reviewed regularly and amended accordingly to meet the children's needs.
- The centre's planning reflects a broad and balanced educational programme, designed to foster the children's all-round development. The short-term planning outlines many stimulating and varied learning experiences for the children. The staff have developed an appropriate system of assessment. They observe and evaluate the quality of the children's responses to play and use the information to inform future planning and to report to the parents on their children's progress.

6. The staff have made a useful start to developing some appropriate methods of evaluating the quality of their work. They observe the practice within the playroom and evaluate the quality of the provision made for the children. As the staff continue to develop this aspect of their work they need to select carefully the area under focus; they are aware of the need to continue to develop this aspect of their work.

7. The early years specialist has made a very good contribution to the overall development of the provision in this pre-school centre. The support provided is well focused, in particular through the cluster support and providing ideas and suggestion to help the staff improve aspects of their work.

8. The quality of education provided in this pre-school is very good. The educational and pastoral needs of the children are being well met. The parents and local community can have confidence in the pre-school's capacity for sustained self-improvement.

No follow-up inspection is required.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2008

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.