

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Anthony's Nursery School,  
Larne

Report of an Inspection  
in January 2010

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*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



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ST ANTHONY'S NURSERY SCHOOL, LARNE

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>
Attending full-time	26	26
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	2	2
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	12	15
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0	0
With English as an additional language	1	1

\* On 1 July.

\*\* 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.	21.2%
Average attendance for the previous year.	90%

### 2. Duration of Sessions

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
4½ hours	-	-

### 3. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	2	0
Nursery Assistants (non-qualified)	0	1

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	0
Trainees	1

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

### 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	52
Percentage returned	56%
Number of written comments	13

**ST ANTHONY'S NURSERY SCHOOL, LARNE, CO ANTRIM, BT40 2BG (313-6332)**  
**INSPECTED: 28 JANUARY 2010**

1. The nursery school is situated in the Craigyhill estate beside St Anthony's Primary School, Fairway, Larne. The children come from the town of Larne and the wider area. At the time of the inspection four children were in their penultimate pre-school year. There have been no staff changes since the last inspection in 2004.

2. The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents, the governors and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. A majority (56%) of the parents responded to the questionnaire and 13 made additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaire indicated that the parents regard the nursery highly and appreciate the:

- approachable, caring and enthusiastic staff;
- positive ethos of the nursery and the good lines of communication; and
- good opportunities for the children to learn through a varied and interesting programme.

All of the responses from the governors and the staff were wholly positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the nursery. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and management of the nursery.

3. The provision for pastoral care within the nursery is very good. Among the strengths are the excellent relationships between the staff and the children, the consistent approach adopted by all of the staff in promoting positive behaviour, and the friendly and welcoming atmosphere that permeates throughout the nursery.

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

5. The nursery gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating, for example, the children have healthy daily snacks, and have access to drinking water throughout the day. There are daily opportunities provided for physical activity.

6. The children are settled and happy; they approach the staff with ease and are confident to ask for help and support. A minority of children continue to engage in solitary or parallel play, they still have limited attention spans and require adult support with sharing and taking turns. A majority of children were observed playing co-operatively and with sustained interest in construction, dough and role-play. They can talk about aspects of the planned themes and topics, they show good interest in books, can recognise and write their own names and they are beginning to use appropriate mathematical language. Many of the children are showing some independence in their personal hygiene, are familiar with the daily routines and their social skills are developing well.

7. The staff regularly engage the children in purposeful discussion and develop natural conversations around the children's interests and home experiences. Through praise and encouragement they support the children's listening skills and promote the children's enjoyment of books, stories, rhymes and early writing. The staff are skilful in the early

identification of potential language and communication delays and difficulties and effective links have been established with the speech and language therapist who provides initial screening and group support within the nursery. The staff provide effective, well targeted support for the children identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning and development.

8. The staff have worked conscientiously over recent years to develop their learning environment both indoors and outdoors. The daily timetable includes a good period of extended play and provides regular opportunities for enthusiastic story and rhyme sessions and energetic physical play. The staff have appropriately identified the need to develop further the physical play programme in order to offer a wider range of physical activities and experiences outdoors.

9. The staff have developed a sound system for planning a comprehensive and balanced programme for the children. The programme is regularly evaluated; children's ideas and interests are clearly reflected in a broad range of stimulating topics and themes. The staff have also adopted a systematic approach to observing and recording the children's progress.

10. The Principal provides effective leadership and manages the nursery efficiently. She has developed a culture of self-evaluation and has encouraged and provided good opportunities for the staff to avail of continuous professional development. For example, the Hanen communication training and the Understanding Schema training which focuses on the children's thinking and learning processes have had a significant impact on improving the quality of the programme provided by the school. The Principal has a clear vision for the continual development and improvement of the nursery school. She and her staff have worked hard to improve the quality of the provision both indoors and outdoors and to raise the profile of the nursery within the local community. The nursery school development plan identifies appropriate priorities for improvement, including the development of the children's physical play and the learning potential in the outdoor area.

**11. The key strengths in this nursery include:**

- the progress being made by the children in relation to their age and stage of development;
- the skilful interactions of the staff which promote the children's interest and motivation;
- the very good provision for those children who require additional support with their learning;
- the developing culture of self-evaluation and the sense of shared purpose among the staff;
- the improvements made to the learning environment both indoors and outdoors; and
- the well established links developed with the parents and with other schools and agencies within the community.

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

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- Part of the perimeter fencing around the nursery school is too low to give adequate security to young children or to prevent intruders gaining access to the grounds.
- The uneven ground and the broken flag stones in the car park and at the entrance to the nursery school present a health and safety hazard.

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