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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
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**Department of Education  
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Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



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## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of an Inspection**

**St Colum's Pre-School Centre  
Portstewart**

**Inspected: November 2007**

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school centre:</b>	St Colum's Pre-School
<b>Address:</b>	Lever Road PORTSTEWART Co Londonderry BT55 7EF
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	7 November 2007
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	14 November 2001

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
• attending the pre-school centre	17	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	15	-
• funded by Department of Education	15	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	-
• with a statement of SEN*	0	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for SEN	0	-
• 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>		
• attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	88.9%	-

\* Special Educational Needs

\*\* 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	3	0
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	3	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

<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>
3 hours	-	190

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	15
Percentage returned:	87%
Number of written comments:	6

**ST COLUM'S PRE-SCHOOL, PORTSTEWART, CO LONDONDERRY, BT55 7EF  
(3BB-0369)**

1. The purpose-built centre is situated in the grounds of St Colum's Primary School, Portstewart. Most of the children who attend the centre come from Portstewart and the surrounding area.

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. Most of the responses indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the provision.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection in the centre is excellent. The inspection evidence indicates that the comprehensive policies and procedures are implemented effectively by all of the staff who show a very high level of concern for the children's welfare.

4. The centre gives 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.**

- There is a caring and supportive atmosphere within the centre. The working relationships between the staff and the children are very good.
- The learning environment is bright, stimulating and well-organised, with attractive and colourful displays that celebrate the children's work.
- The organisation of the centre's day allows for long periods of uninterrupted play. The staff provide the children with sustained support during play; the majority of the interactions between the staff and the children are skilful and promote successfully the development of the children's concentration skills.
- There is a wide range of interesting and imaginative activities that stimulate the children's curiosity and promote good learning opportunities in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The particular strengths of the programme are the promotion of the children's language skills and the personal, social and emotional development.
- The planning and assessment methods are effective. The information from the observation of the children's interaction is used well to plan activities to meet the children's individual interests and needs.
- The centre has useful links with the adjoining primary school. There is very good communication with the parents. An appropriate range of strategies is used to inform the parents about the work of the centre. The management committee and parents contribute effectively to the life and work of the centre.

6. The leader of the centre is an excellent practitioner and is highly committed to providing quality pre-school education for the children and families of the community. The staff are developing well as a team; there is a strong sense of team-work among the dedicated staff. The established culture of reflection and review is evident within their practice. This is exemplified in the comprehensive development plan that identifies appropriate targets for improvement. The latter includes aptly the further development of the outdoor play provision and the extension of the links between the pre-school and the local primary school to support further the smooth transition of the children from the pre-school to the year one class.

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

No follow-up inspection is required.

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