

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Luke's Nursery School,
Twinbrook, Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in February 2013



Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



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In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ST LUKE'S NURSERY SCHOOL, TWINBROOK, BELFAST

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Attending full-time	24	26	
Attending part-time	*		
Under 3 years of age*	*		
With statement of special educational needs			
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs			
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	*	*	
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	5	5	
With English as an additional language			

* Represents less than 5

** 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.	50%
Average attendance for the previous year.	90%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
9:00-1:30	-	-

3. Details of Staff

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

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	49
Percentage returned	83%
Number of written comments	33

1. Introduction

St Luke's Nursery School is situated within the Twinbrook area. The school operates two full-time nursery classes. Since the last inspection, the school building has been extended to include an additional room which is used to facilitate a wide range of additional work with parents and other professionals.

2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations, discussions with the staff and from the scrutiny of a range of relevant documentation provided by the nursery school.

The views of the parents and staff were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. The questionnaires returned from parents, staff and management were highly positive about all aspects of the work of the staff and the provision being provided. The written comments indicated appreciation of the very caring and highly professional approach taken by the staff, the high quality of the leadership, the excellent educational experiences being provided, the progress made by the children and the value added by the nursery school to the local community.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is outstanding; the quality of the pastoral care is also outstanding. The nursery school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Outstanding Very Good Outstanding
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's achievements

The quality of the children's achievements is outstanding.

- The children are highly motivated and engage well in their learning; they spend sustained periods completing activities with concentration and perseverance. They make independent choices, are confident in their use of materials and are developing excellent social skills.
- The children are making excellent progress in developing their listening, language and communication skills. Many of the children use an increasingly extensive range of vocabulary, ask questions and talk about their ideas; those identified as requiring additional support in aspects of their speech and language are making very good progress.

- The children are making very good progress in developing their understanding of early mathematical language and concepts as they are supported to sort, count, make patterns and comparisons naturally during their play. They are encouraged to make close observations and enjoy exploring and investigating the properties of natural materials both indoors and outdoors.
- The children's detailed representational art work is well developed and most can engage in purposeful collaborative role play.

5. **Provision for learning**

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

- A key strength of the provision is the excellent quality of the staff interaction with the children to promote all aspects of their learning and development. The staff have appropriately high expectations of the children. They promote a sense of fun, skilfully model a wide range of language and extend the children's thinking skills naturally through the play, daily routines and well managed group activities. The children who are identified as having specific additional needs benefit from the well focused support of the additional staff employed to ensure a higher ratio of adults to children.
- The schools detailed planning and assessment methods support the staff to implement effectively a broad and balanced pre-school curriculum which is well matched to the needs of all of the children. The children would benefit from a wider variety of regular open-ended activities to support further their imaginative and creative play.
- The school has made excellent progress in developing very good links with the parents. For example, parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and development through the regular informative newsletter, the wide range of appropriate classes provided, the use of good quality home learning packs and the effective link with the speech and language therapist from the local Sure Start. In addition the staff have well developed links with other pre-schools and with the local primary schools to which the children will transfer.
- The playrooms, entrance area and outdoor environment are thoughtfully laid out into richly resourced areas for play which promote independent choice and support the children's language development. The children's own work is displayed attractively throughout the nursery school. The daily timetable is well managed to ensure that all time and space available is used effectively to promote learning.
- The nursery school gives excellent attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. This includes, for example, the provision of healthy breaks, growing vegetables, opportunities for regular energetic activities indoors and outdoors and exploring relevant topics through the curriculum.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. There are excellent working relationships at all levels. The caring, respectful and inclusive ethos contributes very effectively to the children's well being, social skills and excellent behaviour.

6. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The principal provides very effective leadership and management of the nursery school. She involves and values the contributions of the staff, parents and governors resulting in a strong and cohesive team approach.
- The school development plan, the focus for staff development and the processes for self-evaluation are very well linked and embedded to promote effective school improvement.
- The additional resources provided through extended schools are managed effectively to enhance the provision for the children.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is outstanding; the quality of the pastoral care is also outstanding. The nursery school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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