

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St MacNissi's Pre-School
Playgroup, Newtownabbey

Report of an Inspection
in November 2012



CONTENTS

Section		Page
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Inspection methods and evidence base	1
3.	Overall finding of the inspection	1
4.	Children's achievements	1
5.	Provision for learning	2
6.	Leadership and management	2

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

Name of pre-school setting:	St MacNissi's Pre-School Playgroup
Address:	Christine Road NEWTOWNABBEY Co Antrim BT36 6UE
Management Type:	Voluntary
Date of inspection:	28 November 2012
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	24	-
in their immediate pre-school year	24	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	24	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	0	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	-
with English as an additional language	1	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
Attendance:		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	95%	-

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	0	2
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	1
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	1

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session	Number of days open in previous year
3 hours	-	185

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	24
Percentage returned	42%
Number of written comments:	7

1. Introduction

St MacNissis' Pre-School setting joined the Pre-school Programme in 2010; it is situated in St MacNissi's Primary School. The teacher-in-charge of the centre and a classroom assistant were appointed in 2010; a third assistant took up her post in September 2012. The children attending the pre-school setting come from the surrounding area.

2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations and from a range of documentation provided by the pre-school setting.

The views of the parents and staff were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Twenty-four questionnaires were issued to the parents and ten were returned with seven written comments. In particular, the parents indicated their appreciation of the caring and considerate staff and the progress their children were making. All of the staff and four members of the management group also returned the questionnaires with written comments. All of the returns from the questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the work of the settings. No issues were raised.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

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

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Very good Good Very good
--	--------------------------------

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's Achievements

The quality of the children's achievements is very good.

- The children appear happy, respectful, confident and well motivated to learn. They all settle quickly to their chosen activity and make full use of the space available to them in the playroom and the outdoor play area.
- The children demonstrate very good levels of independence in their personal care and hygiene, in their use of the snack routine, when preparing to go outdoors, and in accessing and replacing their chosen resources. During the inspection, there were many examples of concentrated, purposeful and collaborative play.

- All of the children are keen to share their ideas; most of them can express their thoughts articulately and can engage in mature levels of conversation with the adults. A very small number of children have been identified as experiencing difficulties with aspects of their language and communication. The staff have developed appropriate education plans for these children in order to support further the development of their language and communication skills.
- Many of the children can recognise their name in print and a number of them can write their name independently. They should be encouraged to develop these skills further through, for example, labelling their artwork and creative models. The staff need to provide increased opportunities for the children to write across the planned learning activities.

5. Provision for Learning

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

- The provision for pastoral care within the pre-school centre is very good. Among the strengths are the positive working relationships between the adults, the parents and the children. Good, effective pastoral and curricular links between the pre-school and the primary school have been established; these promote a smooth transition for the children as they transfer into year 1.
- Since taking up their posts, the staff have worked hard to create a purposeful and inviting learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, which has resulted in the children's calm and engaged involvement in their play throughout the whole of the session. During the inspection, the quality of the staff interaction with the children was always very good or better.
- As a newly established team, the staff have worked with the primary school's Foundation Stage (FS) co-ordinator. They have made significant progress in developing their short term planning; they are implementing an appropriate play based programme of experiences for the children with a clear focus on learning. They now need to develop further the methods of planning and assessment in order to ensure, challenge and progression in the children's experiences throughout the year.
- The staff give good attention to promoting healthy eating, for example, through the provision of a healthy snack and daily opportunities for outdoor, energetic play activities.

6. Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

- The teacher-in-charge of the pre-school centre is enthusiastic, well motivated and has developed a good team spirit. She provides an excellent role model for her staff.

- The collaborative working arrangements and practices between the pre-school centre and the primary school's senior management team have enabled significant progress to be made in a relatively short period of time. The teacher-in-charge works very effectively and collaboratively with the FS coordinator within the primary school; they have established a culture of self-evaluation to promote continuous improvement. They have worked conscientiously with all of the staff over the last two years to improve significant aspects of the provision and to ensure a greater consistency of approach in planning for, and meeting, the needs of all of the children. They are also providing a continuum of experiences that will be built upon as the children move up through the primary school. The centre has a detailed and well in-formed development plan with appropriate targets for improvement.
- The staff have established very good working relationships with the parents who are kept well informed about the work of the centre and their children's progress through a range of relevant meetings, a parents' information booklet and a monthly newsletter.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education

CONCLUSION

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

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2013

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 ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk

