

4. BELFAST PLAYCENTRE

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| Officer responsible Community Advocate | Author Bruce Meder, Community Development Adviser, DDI 941-5408 |
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The purpose of this report is to seek funding for a one-off grant to enable the Belfast Playcentre to pay their Supervisor salary until June 2003.

POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES MET

This application for funding will help to meet the outcomes of the Council's Early Childhood Education Policy and the Board's objective of "foster(ing) a strong sense of community". It also helps meet the Council's Community Policy goal of "supplement(ing) the capabilities and resources of community groups and structures".

BACKGROUND

Belfast Playcentre is located adjacent to Sheldon Park in Belfast. It has 18 children on its role (with a further five due to be enrolled), five of whom are aged under two. Its previous license enabled it to cater for up to 20 (six aged under two years) at any sessions.

It operates three mornings per week (Wednesday to Friday) from 9.15 am to 11.45 am. On two of these days (Wednesday, Thursday) a paid Supervisor is employed. Two parents voluntarily supervise Friday sessions.

LICENSING

The Playcentre's licence is presently out of date. As a result, the Playcentre is unable to attract bulk funding from the Ministry of Education. However, the Ministry is due to visit the Playcentre in October. Indications are that a licence will be granted to the Playcentre subsequent to these visits.

FUNDING SHORTFALL

Although a new licence is expected by the end of this calendar year, bulk funding through the Ministry will not be available until the new financial year, ie July 2003. This leaves the Playcentre with a shortfall in income. The most pressing need is for funding to pay their Supervisor. The costs of this until end of June 2003 are \$5,760.

FUNDRAISING

The Playcentre is continually fund raising. For instance, they are presently running a raffle and are awaiting the decision of an application to the Community Trust. The Playcentre rooms are also rented out once a fortnight which helps towards their income. Funds raised through these initiatives are for operational and equipment costs.

In attempting to find funds for the Supervisors salary an application was made to Lottery Grants. However, this was declined, as Lottery Welfare does not grant to childcare costs.

CONCLUSION

The Playcentre is meeting a community need in Belfast, it has a high level of voluntary input and continually fundraises. It has immediate need for a one-off injection of funds to pay its Supervisor.

Staff

Recommendation: That \$5,760 be allocated to the Belfast Playcentre for Supervisor costs, from Discretionary Funds.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the Belfast Playcentre be allocated \$5,760 from 2002/2003 SCAP Funds for the Supervisor costs.