

Kilmood Playgroup and Teconnaught Preschool

Schools involved

Kilmood PG [Newtownards]

Teconnaught Cross Community Pre School PG



Kilmood Playgroup and Teconnaught Preschool commenced their partnership in September 2025. They are both rural settings nestled within a close-knit community.

What Shared Education activities have you organised/ taken part in?

The dual sessions support children's confidence, social skills, and familiarity with routines, aligning strongly with Personal Social Development and early communication within Language and Literacy. The Forest School trip to Fodder, including the scavenger hunt and nature walk, enriched children's understanding of the natural world through The World Around Us while also promoting physical development and teamwork. Visits to the library for Rhythm and Rhyme strengthened early literacy, listening skills, and engagement. At Kaylee's Kidzone, role-play activities helped children explore community roles (WAU), develop expressive language, practise early numeracy, and engage creatively in line with The Arts. The Ark Farm visit will extend children's knowledge of animals, life cycles, and farming within WAU. Time at the park will support gross motor development and cooperative play, and the beach walk will provide meaningful learning about the environment, natural materials, and seasonal change, linking closely to The World Around Us.

How have these activities benefited the educators and children?

These activities have strengthened relationships by giving both groups valuable opportunities to collaborate, share practice, and build confidence working alongside another setting. For children, meeting peers from different communities and engaging with local places has expanded their social experiences, supported new skill development, and helped them feel more connected to the wider community around them. It has also given the children experiences that they would not have had

otherwise.

What have been the challenges?

The main challenges were coordinating planning across different schedules and managing the extra administrative work involved in a first-time project. Even with extra paid hours, finding additional time outside the working day was difficult, and Social Services guidelines added further time constraints. We expect the process to be smoother next year with the experience we have gained.

Let's hear from the children

At Kilmoor we have to pack away after welcome time the children were told to go and play. A child from Teconnaught visiting at Kilmoor for the first time looked around and asked, "Where are all the toys then?" which gave everyone a laugh. Another lovely moment came when an usually shy Kilmoor child reassured a slightly anxious visitor by saying, "I will help you here," showing how quickly friendships began to form across both settings.

How has your partnership engaged with your local community and what has been the impact?

Our partnership has actively engaged with the local community by using local suppliers for resources, involving and encouraging parents, making use of the library, and supporting nearby businesses through our visits and activities. This has given children meaningful opportunities to learn about their community, build new skills, and experience local facilities in a positive, connected way.

Top tips for others

A helpful tip is not to be put off by the administration at the start, it feels like a lot, but once you get into the routine it becomes much more manageable. With experience, the planning and organisation become smoother, making each year easier to deliver. Running dual sessions at the start in our own settings was also beneficial because we were familiar with the environment, though it's important to keep Social Services guidelines on ratios and numbers in mind when planning.

Project details

Type of Project
ASPIRE

Academic Year
2025-26