

# Pre-School to feature in RTÉ documentary

**A BANBRIDGE nursery school's efforts to stamp out racism, sectarianism and physical prejudice is to be the focus of a television documentary.**

A TV crew from RTÉ will visit Banbridge Pre-School Playgroup on May 12 to film the children, their parents and classroom assistants.

Playgroup leader, Linda McAdam was approached to participate in the documentary, having recently completed training in the Media Initiative for Children 'Respecting Differences' programme.

The initiative is a joint effort between the Peace Initiatives Institute (Pii) and NIPPA – The Early Years Organisation – to use mass

media and classroom experience to instil in young children the value of respecting and including others who are different.

Linda took part in a three-day intensive training course in December and last week she began implementing the 'Respecting Differences' programme in the playgroup.

Through the use of educational resources, the children will learn about cultural, racial and physical differ-

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ences.

"There is a cartoon which we show on TV which has four little characters in it," explained Linda.

"There is one little boy who is left out because he has a patch on his eye and wears glasses.

"The rest of the characters realise that he is sad and at the end they make him part of their group.

"It really makes the children understand that we are all different but we can still live together.

"We also have four puppets so we are using them as

characters to represent being happy and sad.

"We use flags from different cultures around the world in our teaching and show different sports such as hurling, hockey, camogie and football."

The pre-school was approached by NIPPA to take part in the RTÉ documentary.

"They asked if we would be happy to have the television crew come up and do some filming with us," explained Linda.

"They will be talking to some of the parents, the children and ourselves about the 'Respecting Differences' programme.

"It's a great lift for us and it's a great programme to be

involved in.

"So far it has been brilliant and the children are really enjoying it."

Sixty playgroups from across Northern Ireland and the Republic are currently participating in the programme.

Linda encouraged other early years providers to consider signing up.

"We have always been very cross-community at the playgroup and hopefully we have now taken that one step further," said Linda.

"There are so many problems in the Province, and indeed worldwide, in terms of racism and sectarianism and I'm glad to be playing a small part in helping to stamp it out."