

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Shaftesbury Nursery School,
Belfast

Report of an inspection in
October 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Quantitative terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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%

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on Leadership and management:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The nursery school / playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school / playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school /playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school/ playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school/ playgroup needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's/ playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The nursery school / playgroup needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's / playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

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1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school settings, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#).

Inspectors observed learning and teaching through play, the children's achievements, progression and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, and held formal and informal discussions with staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with those involved with leadership and management, including the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

A minority of the parents and a small number of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. Almost all of the responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the provision.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children¹, the purpose of inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to evaluate the:

- children's achievements and standards;
- quality of provision for learning; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Shaftesbury Nursery School is a double unit nursery school situated in the Greater Shankill area of Belfast which provides full time places for fifty two children. The school provides a breakfast club and after-school club for the children and, in addition, has a designated parent support worker.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Very Good
Provision for learning	Very Good
Leadership and management	Very Good

¹ In the case of a Day Nursery this refers only to the DE-funded pre-school provision.

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are very well-settled. They are beginning to show good levels of independence and are becoming familiar with the daily routines of the nursery. They approach the staff and other children with ease, engage in concentrated and purposeful play and talk about their ideas, feelings and experiences.
- Almost all of the children have good speech and oral language for their age and stage of development, can follow simple instructions and listen attentively when involved in group activities. The staff have identified a small number of children with specific language needs and are taking appropriate steps to address these. The children's art and other representational work is of a good standard and much of their art work is prominently displayed around the nursery. The staff place much emphasis on the development of the children's language and literacy and the children are responding very positively to this by displaying a keen interest in story and reference books. In some examples of play, the children showed good mathematical awareness and made reference to shape and number in context.

6. Provision for learning

- During the inspection there were examples of very good quality interaction between the staff and the children. The staff respond quickly and appropriately to the children's needs and interests and join readily in their play.
- The written planning appropriately guides the key staff in their work. More emphasis should be placed on the intended learning in all activities and routines to support all staff more fully. They know the children well and use a variety of appropriate methods to gather evidence about their progress and development. This information informs the planning and is shared with the parents throughout the year.
- The staff provide an interesting and varied programme for the children throughout the year. The provision includes: trips to places of educational interest; visitors to the nursery setting and more specialised activities provided by outside agencies.
- The nursery is very attractively presented and well laid out to utilize all the available space for parents, staff and children. The daily timetable is organised to provide a range of indoor and outdoor activities and routines and includes lengthy periods of free play. Aspects of the outdoor provision need to be reviewed to ensure the children have continual access to a wider range of activities. This should enable them to develop their play further and provide more breadth, variety and challenge in the play experiences available to them.
- The children in the group who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified at an early stage and programmes are designed appropriately to address individual need.
- The quality of pastoral care is very good. A caring, friendly and supportive ethos permeates the nursery and is evident in the working relationships between the staff, children and their parents.
- The nursery promotes healthy eating and allocates appropriate time for energetic physical activity.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff work well together in the best interest of the children. A strength is the additional provision of focused parental support which develops relationships with parents, parenting skills and helps to ensure that parents play an active role in their child's education. The staff have developed effective links with the main feeder primary schools, appropriate support agencies and the local community. The board of governors are very supportive of the staff, challenge the work of the school appropriately and thereby contribute effectively to school improvement.
- The staff engage in self-evaluation which modifies their practice and helps maintain high standards of care and education for the children. A short one year school improvement plan helps to inform the next cycle of development planning; timely work is currently underway to develop it into the full three year plan required.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the nursery has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children which reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Overall effectiveness

Shaftesbury Nursery School has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school sustains improvement.

APPENDIX 1

Health and safety

1. A risk assessment needs to be carried out to ensure that all areas of the perimeter fencing are totally secure.
2. Bicycle helmets should always be worn by the children when riding two-wheeler bicycles.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON SHAFTESBURY NURSERY SCHOOL

1. Details of children

Number of children:	
Attending full-time	52
Funded by Department of Education	52
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#
With English as an additional language	#

* On 1 July.

** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Denotes a number less than 5.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average attendance for the previous year.	87%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
9.30-1.30		

3. Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	2	5
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		5
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	2	
New appointments within the previous 12 months		

Number of: ****	
Students	#
Trainees	

**** Total placements since September of current year

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