



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*

**Providing Inspection Services for  
Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Follow-up Inspection**

**of**

**Little Acorns Playgroup  
Derrynoose**

**October 2014**

## **FOLLOW UP REPORT TO THE INSPECTION OF LITTLE ACORNS PLAYGROUP**

The inspection of Little Acorns Playgroup in October 2012, evaluated the provision overall as satisfactory. The inspection identified the need to:

- review the daily routines in order to provide a group story time and the opportunity for a more extended period of outdoor play;
- develop further the methods of observations and assessment and use the information to inform the planning for individuals and small groups; and
- provide a comprehensive training programme for the new leader, including the opportunity to observe best practice in a range of pre-school settings.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two interim follow-up visits in May 2013 and May 2014, and a follow up inspection on 16 October 2014.

The action plan received by the Department of Education (DE) following the inspection was of a good quality.

In the interval since the original inspection, the following changes which affect the work of the playgroup have taken place:

- a member of staff was appointed to the role of acting leader in September 2013; and
- a new leader was recently appointed and will take up the position when the necessary employment procedures are completed.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- since taking up her temporary role in September 2013 the acting leader has promoted a strong team spirit at all levels and has overseen many positive changes in the provision evidenced in this report;
- the organisation of the daily timetable has been reviewed to include lengthy periods of indoor and outdoor play. The children now have valuable opportunities to engage in purposeful and productive play and to partake in group story sessions and activities;
- the revised key worker system ensures a consistent approach to observing and recording the children's responses to the planned activities and to monitoring their progress and development over a period of time. The information gathered is used very well to address the differing needs of the children and is also shared with the parents on a regular basis;
- the enhanced planning outlines variety, challenge and progression in the programme and is regularly evaluated to guide the staff in their daily work with the children and to inform future learning and teaching;
- the quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is now consistently of a high standard and contributes to the very positive ethos in the playgroup;

- the process of embedding self-evaluation and development planning is progressing well with appropriate reflection on the practice and suitable areas identified for improvement; there is clear evidence of ongoing improvement since the original inspection; and
- on the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

## **Conclusion**

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

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