

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Brambly Hedge Community
Playgroup, Bready, Co Tyrone

Report of an inspection in
December 2013

eti

*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

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Quantitative terms

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 in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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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 centres, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI's publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#)

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

The arrangements for this inspection included:

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

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	19	*	16% ¹	*
Staff	*	*	*	*
Management group	*	*	*	*

* fewer than 5

Almost all of the responses and comments made in the confidential questionnaires were highly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. The responses were shared with the acting leader and the chair of the management group.

2. Context

Brambly Hedge Community Playgroup is situated in the grounds of Bready Jubilee Primary School in the village of Bready, County Tyrone. The playgroup operates a part-time session for 19 children who attend from the local and wider rural area. At the time of the inspection, an acting leader was in place.

3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

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

¹ The ETI is trialling a new range of methods to collect the views of parents/carers and, as a result, the percentage of questionnaires returned may be low.

4. Overall finding

Overall Performance Level	Very good
Achievements and Standards	Very good
Provision	Very good
Leadership and Management	Very good

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

The children are happy and emotionally secure and approach the adults with confidence. Almost all settle quickly and eagerly to their play activities and have a positive disposition to their learning. Overall, the children's behaviour is very good; the children treat one another, the adults and their play resources and equipment with respect.

Most of the children are keen to express their feelings, ideas and reasoning in relation to their learning through play; they show very good progress in their developing language and can explain and share what they are doing. Many of the children engage with very good levels of interest in browsing books and other print resources; they are developing well their early mark-making and understand that print can provide information as well as tell stories.

The children are building well their early understanding of important mathematical concepts and a majority use key mathematical vocabulary confidently in various contexts of their free play and more structured activities. They explore and investigate a good range of natural materials and are very interested in their environment. The children's representational artwork contains increasing attention to detail, demonstrating the progression in their fine motor skills and manipulation of tools and materials. The adults celebrate their creativity in attractive displays of their paintings and models.

The children move freely and confidently amongst the various play areas. They demonstrate high levels of independence and co-operation across all aspects of their play and regular routines; for example, in how they understand and respond to various prompts and symbols to build their self-reliance, select and use the well-chosen resources and equipment provided for them and take responsibility for self-registering and managing important aspects of the buffet break.

Overall, the children demonstrate very good progress in their development in relation to the time of the year across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.

6. Provision

All of the staff's interactions with the children are consistently of a high standard. The adults engage the children's curiosity and extend their reasoning through skilful open-ended questions. As a result, many of the children give thoughtful and extended responses to explain their thinking and creative ideas. In particular, the staff use appropriate mathematical language very naturally when participating in the children's free play and organised activities; consequently, many of the children show an early proficiency and interest in counting, sorting, making comparisons and measuring using the appropriate vocabulary well.

The carefully planned programme is broad and balanced and takes very good account of the children's stages of development and interests. The systems in place for observing, assessing and recording the children's progress focus appropriately on the quality of the children's responses and highlight clearly the future actions which need to be taken to enable each child to achieve their fullest potential.

The staff empower the children to make choices, take on purposeful responsibilities and manage key aspects of their personal organisation. The thoughtful improvements the staff have implemented in the playroom's layout and resources have contributed significantly to the children's all-round independence and confidence.

Pastoral care in the playgroup is very good. The adults know the children very well and work effectively as a team to ensure that their individual needs are well met. The caring and child-centred ethos is also evident in the very responsive ways in which the adults engage with the children in their free play activities.

The playgroup gives very good attention to developing the children's early understanding of healthy lifestyles; the children are provided with healthy snack choices and a good range of regular physical activities.

7. Leadership and management

The acting leader is a very good learning role model for the children and the staff. She collaborates successfully and tirelessly with the rest of the highly skilful staff team to bring about continuous improvement in all aspects of the playgroup's provision. The dedicated and timely support given by the management committee, the early years specialist and the parents has also contributed significantly to this important work.

There are effective, systematic processes in place to evaluate the provision; the staff take very good account of all the available information, including the views of the parents and the children, to implement appropriate improvement actions.

The playgroup has built up a good range of links and partnerships with the parents, the community and various external agencies to support and extend the effectiveness of their work with the children. The parents are welcomed into the playgroup and are given regular information about the provision.

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.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is very good; the quality of the pastoral care is also very good. The playgroup has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Brambly Hedge Community Playgroup
Address:	12 Cloughboy Road Bready Strabane Co Tyrone BT82 0DN
Management Type:	Voluntary
Date of inspection:	4 December 2013
Date of previous inspection:	April 2007

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	19	
in their immediate pre-school year	19	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	19	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	0	
with a statement of special educational needs	0	
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	*	
with English as an additional language	0	
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	
Attendance:		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	78.07%	

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader		3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		0
New appointments within previous 12 months		1

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session	Number of days open in previous year
2½ hours	-	188

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