

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Brockagh Playgroup,  
Coalisland

Report of an Inspection  
in November 2012

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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school setting:</b>	Brockagh Playgroup
<b>Address:</b>	Brockagh Youth Centre Mountjoy Road Coalisland DUNGANNON Co Tyrone BT71 5DQ
<b>Management Type:</b>	Private

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	14 November 2012
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	N/A

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
attending the pre-school setting	14	11
in their immediate pre-school year	14	6
funded by Department of Education (DE)	14	0
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	0
with a statement of special educational needs	0	0
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	0
with English as an additional language	0	0
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	0
<b>Attendance:</b>		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	84%	0

\* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

\*\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff, including leader	0	2
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	0	2
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	0
Trainees	0

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

## 3. Details of Sessions

<b>Duration of morning session</b>	<b>Duration of afternoon session</b>	<b>Number of days open in previous year</b>
3½ hours	-	189

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	14
Percentage returned	64%
Number of written comments:	5

## 1. Introduction

Brockagh Playgroup is situated in Brockagh, a rural village located in the hinterland of Coalisland, Co Tyrone. The playgroup is privately operated and has developed significantly since joining the pre-school education programme in 1998; it also provides additional day care services

## 2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations and from a range of documentation provided by the playgroup.

The views of the parents, staff, and management group were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Fourteen questionnaires were issued to the parents and nine were returned with five written comments. All of the staff and the management group also returned the questionnaires with written comments. All of the returns from the questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the work of the playgroup.

## 3. Overall finding of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the playgroup is good; the playgroup has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement in the provision for learning which the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The inspectorate will monitor the playgroup's progress on the area for improvement.

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Good Good Very good
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## KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

### 4. Children's Achievements

**The quality of the children's achievements is good.**

- The children and their parents are warmly welcomed on arrival to the playgroup. The children are well-settled into the High/Scope programme routines and have developed positive attitudes to learning.
- During the inspection, the children co-operated well with one another and with the adults; some of them are developing firm friendships. Most of the children are beginning to take good care of their materials, to tidy-up after their play and are able to self-manage at the snack table to pour their own drinks.
- The children are friendly and caring towards one another; they listen well to the adults and to one another. They enjoy role-play, stories and rhymes and exploring and experimenting in activities related to the world around us area of the pre-school curriculum.

## **5. Provision for Learning**

### **The quality of the provision for learning is good.**

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is outstanding. The staff foster very highly the children's confidence and self-esteem through an ethos of kindness and positive regard for them. The children display high levels of mutual respect for one another and the staff; their manners and behaviours in consideration of the needs of others are excellent. They have excellent listening skills and are able to observe, draw and communicate their ideas to the staff. Many are able to role-play very well and express their feelings in a happy and relaxed manner to the staff.
- Effective communication has been established with the parents and outside agencies to highlight any identified concerns about child development. There are very good transitional arrangements made with the local primary schools to which the children transfer; and the staff are proactive in helping the children to become familiar with the adults and settings through on-going talk about moving-on and using photographs of the primary school staff and learning environments.
- During the inspection, the staff often extended the children's language through singing, stories and rhymes and there were many instances where they built effectively on the children's interest and ideas. A few instances of opportunities for learning were missed to utilise all the learning potential from the activities. The staff have acquired training relating to a speech and language programme; it is appropriate that they continue to embed the strategies acquired to address the identified language deficits in their everyday work.
- The playgroup staff have worked very hard to create a bright, and stimulating learning environment for the children. The children's work is celebrated, presented attractively in the playroom and labelled appropriately with the children's names and annotated with text of their spoken words which is effectively developing the children's awareness of the written word. There are interesting scientific learning experiences; familiar fruits and exotic vegetables are displayed that stimulate the children's curiosity and there very good opportunities for exploring growing and the care of plants and vegetables.
- The staff have developed a systematic approach to planning for and assessment of learning based on the High/scope method. There is a good flow to the organisation of the day and the staff provided a lengthy period of free play wherein the children sustained very good concentrated play. The staff routinely observe and rigorously record the children's progress and development and this is linked well to the planned programme. As a result the children are effectively developing a broad range of skills, especially in mathematics and the arts, and are acquiring a very good knowledge of the world around them.
- The children are provided with a healthy snack and regular physical activity in the small outdoor area. The snack is generally well-used to promote the children's independence and development; a few more opportunities could be developed further to promote the development and consolidation of the children's self-help skills.

## **6. Leadership and Management**

**The quality of leadership and management is very good.**

- The leader, who is also the proprietor, sets a positive tone for child-centred education; she has a clear vision for high quality learning. The leader has excellent support from her deputy; the teamwork and commitment to the development of the playgroup from all staff is exemplary.
- The leader has, through her very good management at multiple levels, overcome many restrictions in order to re-model a local community building to create a stimulating, inviting learning environment for the children. The leader acknowledges the important role the local community have played supporting the playgroup.
- The playgroup staff have the support of a very good early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation who has consistently supported the playgroup in the development of the High/scope provision. Her well-focused advice to the playgroup staff has enabled them to create a broad range of child-centred learning experiences underpinned by a range of policies and procedures to guide the management of the playgroup. The playgroup has a three year development plan and the early years specialist is supporting and monitoring very effectively the ongoing improvement of the self-evaluation processes within the playgroup.
- 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 the playgroup is good; the playgroup has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement in the provision for learning which the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The inspectorate will monitor the playgroup's progress on the area for improvement.

The area for improvement is:

- the need for the staff to more consistently embed their acquired range of strategies for high quality interaction.



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