PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION

Education and Training Inspectorate

Kilrea Community Early Years, Coleraine

Report of an Inspection in January 2014

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

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

Contents

Section		Page
1.	Inspection method and evidence base	1
2.	Context	1
3.	Focus of inspection	1
4.	Overall finding	2
5.	Achievements and standards	2
6.	Provision	2
7.	Leadership and management	3
8.	Conclusion	3
	Appendix	

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 and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	24	4[1]	16%	2
Staff	*	*	*	*
Management	*	*	*	*

* fewer than 5

The small number of parental responses indicated very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the educational and pastoral provision provided by the playgroup. In particular, they reported on the dedicated and caring ethos and the good range of learning activities being provided.

2. Context

Kilrea Community Early Years, formerly known as Kilrea Playgroup, is situated in its own premises on the outskirts of Kilrea town. At the time of the inspection, the pre-school was operating one part-time morning session; all of the children were in their immediate pre-school year. The pre-school will operate an additional afternoon session in the next academic year. The children who attend the playgroup come from the local and surrounding area. Since the last inspection there has been a significant change to the staff team; the current leader took up post in 2012.

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	Good
Achievements and Standards	Good
Provision	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children settle quickly to their chosen play activities and engage in concentrated and sustained play throughout the session. They are well motivated and enjoy their learning.

- Almost all of the children talk confidently and fluently to staff and each other; they ask questions, direct their own play and discuss their experiences and ideas. The children enjoy books and stories during large group sessions, in smaller informal groups and on their own. A majority of them are developing a good understanding of simple mathematical ideas and use the associated language during their play. For example, they often count, sort, match and make comparisons of size and shape. The children also participate enthusiastically in counting songs and rhymes.

- The children collaborate well as they play together with imagination in the role play and construction areas. They use the painting and craft area confidently to make some simple representations of people and to develop simple collage work. Many of the children ask questions and enjoy investigating the natural materials available, for example in the role play, construction area and large outdoor digging area.

- The children's natural creativity and curiosity should be built upon and developed further through planning progression in the development of art, early science and music making.

6. Provision

- The attractive and well maintained learning environment is laid out effectively to provide a good range of well resourced learning activities both indoors and outdoors.

- The new staff team are making good progress in developing their planning and assessment methods and recognise the need for ongoing staff development with their early years specialist to enhance their skills further. The planned programme provides good opportunities for learning across all six areas of the pre-school curriculum and there are appropriate systems in place for assessing the children's progress and development.

- The staff has many strengths in their interactions with the children. They create a caring and supportive climate for learning, encourage the children to be independent, and listen to and support the children's own ideas. The children approach the staff with confidence and engage in sustained conversations with them. The staff need to be more consistent in extending the children's ideas, thinking and learning during activities and in the daily routines.

- The pastoral care provided for the children is very good. There is a caring and inclusive ethos that values each child and promotes positive relationships. The children are co-operative and their social skills and behaviour are excellent.

- The children enjoy a healthy break, enjoy talking about food during role play and have regular opportunities to engage in physical play activities.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the pre-school have worked hard to establish a well resourced, cross community pre-school facility for the local area. The early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation provides good guidance and support which is valued by the staff.

- While the process of self-evaluation is at an early stage of development, the pre-school development plan identifies a number of relevant priorities for improvement and the newly established team have a strong commitment to ongoing professional development and training to ensure continuous improvement.

- The staff provide information for parents through a range of appropriate methods and have good pastoral links with the key feeder primary schools.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the playgroup has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department but the following issues need to be addressed:

    - the designated staff need to complete their training; and

    - the documentation needs to be kept up-to date, include current roles and responsibilities, and communicated to parents.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school is good. There are important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the pre-school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The areas for improvement are to:

- develop further the staff interactions to more consistently build on the children's ideas to develop their language and thinking; and

- continue to raise the standards and achievements across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the progress the pre-school progress on the areas for improvement.

APPENDIX

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Kilrea Community Early Years
Address:	15, Moneygran Road Kilrea COLERAINE Co Londonderry BT51 5SJ
Management Type:	voluntary

Date of inspection:	January 2014
Date of previous inspection:	

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	**am session**	**pm session**
attending the pre-school setting	24	-
in their immediate pre-school year	24	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	24	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	-	-
with a statement of special educational needs	n/a	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	-
with English as an additional language	1	-
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	93.8%	-

* 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	1
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	1
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	

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	-	189

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