

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Dromore Community
Playgroup, Co Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
May 2014

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 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	32	14	44% ¹	*
Staff	*	*	*	*

* fewer than 5

All of the parents who responded to the questionnaire were positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. All of the staff responded and were also wholly positive about their work.

2. Context

Dromore Community Playgroup is situated in a purpose built centre at the edge of Dromore town in County Tyrone. The leader and almost all of the staff team have been in post for over ten years. The playgroup has a morning and afternoon session; all of the children are in their immediate pre-school year. Since the last inspection in 2006, there have been two staff redundancies and a new assistant has been appointed.

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	Very Good
Provision	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- All of the children settle quickly to sustained concentrated play. During each session, the children play independently and collaboratively, make choices about the activities they engage in and the materials they use and demonstrate very good levels of independence.
- The children take a pride in their creative work and the standard of their representational drawing and early mark making is very good. They make good use of the wide range of books available throughout the playroom; the children enjoy listening to stories in small groups during the session and are very attentive during the large group story time. They communicate well with each other and with adults and their behaviour is exemplary.
- All of the children enjoy the well-developed outdoor provision. They display a natural curiosity in their environment and talk with enthusiasm about the plants and mini-beasts they observe.
- Almost all of the children use mathematical language with confidence; they count, recognise colours and use appropriate language to talk about shape, space and capacity during play.

6. Provision

- The staff work hard to provide an interesting and well-organised learning environment and use well all of the available space in the playroom and the outdoor area. They value and celebrate well the children's work in attractive displays around the room. The daily snack and other necessary routines are well-organised and provide good opportunities for the children to continue to develop their independence, social and conversational skills.
- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently good and at times very good. In the best practice, the staff engage in sustained interactions with the children, extending the children's language and modelling good play. It will be important for the staff to develop their interactions further in order to extend the children's thinking and problem solving skills.
- The children's educational programme is well-balanced with good to very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. A particular strength of the provision is the development of the children's language and early writing skills and the very good opportunities for learning about the World Around Us. The staff are currently developing further the early

mathematics curriculum. There is also a need to ensure further progression in the physical development of the children. The staff have appropriately identified the need to review their approaches to the medium and short-term planning, as they currently focus on the activities provided and do not take sufficient account of the need for progression and challenge in the children's learning.

- The staff make observations of the children's learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum, however they need to make more effective use of these observations to assess the children's progress and to inform future planning, to better meet the needs of all of the children.
- The staff have benefitted from their participation in the Special Educational Needs in Early Years capacity building pilot within the Western Education and Library Board area. They implement effectively a range of strategies developed through the pilot to support the children identified as having additional learning needs.
- The provision for pastoral care is very good. There is a warm, inclusive and welcoming ethos in the playgroup; the children are happy and turn readily to the staff for support and help.
- Very good attention is given to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the provision of a healthy snack and a daily session of outdoor physical activity.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader is a good role model, as demonstrated through her effective and caring work with the children. She is well-supported by the skilful staff who have developed an effective team approach to the work of the playgroup. The staff have made a good start to the process of self-evaluation and development planning; there is a development plan in place which identifies appropriate areas for improvement within the setting's provision and is well supported by clear action plans to guide the further development of their work.
- The playgroup staff have received very good support from the early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation. In particular, the staff and early years specialist have worked together to improve the learning environment, to develop positive behaviour strategies and to enhance the process of self-evaluation.
- The playgroup has good pastoral links with the local primary schools to provide a smooth transition for the children. Through the Special Educational Needs in Early Years capacity building pilot, the staff are developing links with a wide range of outside agencies to access support and advice in providing for children with additional learning needs.
- The staff has developed very good and effective links with the parents through regular newsletters, questionnaires and fundraising events. The parents are encouraged to enter the playroom at the end of each session to see their children's work and to use the well-organised lending library.

- 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 Departments.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this 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 area for improvement is:

- to make more effective use of the observation assessment and planning processes to ensure further progression and challenge in the children's learning.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Dromore Community Playgroup
Address:	14 Omagh Road DROMORE Co Tyrone BT78 3AH
Management Type:	Committee

Date of inspection:	19 May 2014
Date of previous inspection:	1 February 2006

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	23	9
in their immediate pre-school year	23	9
funded by Department of Education (DE)	23	9
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2		
with a statement of special educational needs	0	0
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	9	2
with English as an additional language	0	0
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	1
Attendance:		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year		

* 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	4	1
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	4	0
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	2
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	2½ hours	190

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