

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Green Elves Community
Playgroup, Greencastle

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
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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	16	10	63%	6
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. In particular, they commented on the happy children, the hard working and caring leader and staff, and the attractive well maintained learning environment. All of the staff responded and were also wholly positive about their work.

2. Context

Green Elves Community Playgroup is situated in a purpose built centre in a rural area of Greencastle, County Tyrone. The leader has been in post for over twenty years. Since the last inspection in 2006, a new assistant has been appointed and the outdoor play area has been further developed.

3. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

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

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

- All of the children are happy and confident and settle quickly to sustained concentrated play. They play independently and collaboratively, make choices about the activities they engage in and the materials they use and demonstrate very high levels of independence. The children communicate well with each other and with adults and their behaviour is exemplary.
- The children take a pride in their creative work often spending long periods completing their pieces of work; the standard of their representational drawing is very good. They are imaginative and creative in their play and often lead the learning by following their own ideas.
- All of the children are aware of print and they make excellent use of the wide range of opportunities throughout the play areas to mark-make and experiment with early writing. They also make very 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.
- All of the children enjoy the very well-developed outdoor provision. They display a natural curiosity in their environment and talk with enthusiasm and confidence about their activities and about the local area.
- Almost all of the children use mathematical language with confidence; they count, recognise colours and use appropriate language to talk about shape, space and measurement naturally 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 very well organised and provide excellent 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 very good. They listen well to the children and respond to their ideas. They model good play and engage in sustained conversations with the children to guide the learning and extend the children's vocabulary.

- The children's educational programme is well-balanced with very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Particular strengths are the excellent provision for outdoor learning, and the development of all aspects of the arts curriculum, including imaginative role-play, singing and creative work.
- The planning is comprehensive and guides well the work of the staff with the children. It is well-informed by the thorough and rigorous system for observing the children at play and assessing the progress in their learning. The staff have very good plans in place to meet the individual needs of the children who require additional help with their learning.
- The provision for pastoral care is excellent. There is a warm, inclusive and welcoming ethos in the playgroup. The staff treat all of the children with care and respect, and there are very good working relationships between the staff and the children. The children are secure and relaxed with the adults and turn to them easily for help and support.
- 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 or indoor physical activity.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader is highly committed to the work of the playgroup and has a clear vision for the future development of the setting. She is well-supported by the skilful staff who have developed a strong team approach to all aspects of the work of the playgroup.
- The process of self-evaluation and development planning is well established; the staff have carried out curriculum audits and have set appropriate targets for improvement in their three year development plan.
- The recently appointed early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation has built effectively on the work of the previous early years specialist to work well with the leader and staff to further develop the processes of self -evaluation.
- The playgroup has very good pastoral links with the local primary school to provide a smooth transition for the children. The staff has developed very good and effective links with the parents. Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress and they are informed about aspects of the provision and the work of the playgroup through a regular, informative newsletter. The playgroup has very good links with the local community and outside agencies in order to improve the children's learning experiences and to meet their support needs.
- 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 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.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Green Elves Playgroup
Address:	Old School House 277 Crockanboy Road Greencastle OMAGH Co Tyrone BT79 7QP
Management Type:	Committee

Date of inspection:	21 May 2014
Date of previous inspection:	25 January 2006

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	19	
in their immediate pre-school year	16	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	16	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	16	
with a statement of special educational needs	0	
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	
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	95%	

* 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	2
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
3 hours	-	188

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