

EOTAS INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Lea Green Primary Referral
Unit, Glengormley

Report of an inspection in
November 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Quantitative terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 when reporting on Achievements and standards, on Provision for learning and on Leadership and management:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school.

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

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1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) provision which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication Together Towards Improvement: a process for self evaluation at: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-post-primary.htm>

Inspectors observed learning and teaching, scrutinised documentation and the children's written work and held formal and informal discussions with them (individually and in groups), their teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included a meeting with a representative from the Education Authority and the opportunity for parents, teaching and support staff to complete confidential questionnaires. A small number of the parents of the children and the majority (5) of the staff responded to the questionnaires. The parental responses were positive in all aspects and showed appreciation of the support provided within Lea Green Primary Referral Unit. The teacher and support staff questionnaire responses were mainly positive, and the written comments indicated support for the unit management. Concerns in relation to limited resources and ineffective communication were discussed with the Area Head of Alternative Education and the senior teacher; these have been commented on within the report.

2. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all young people, the purpose of an EOTAS inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to:

- evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the young people;
- evaluate the unit's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and outcomes; and
- inform the unit's planning for improvement.

3. Context

Lea Green Primary Referral Unit (the unit) and Behaviour Support Outreach Service (outreach) is part of the Education Authority's provision for primary aged children with social emotional and behavioural difficulties in Newtownabbey, Ballyclare, Carrickfergus and surrounding areas. The unit is based in a mobile classroom in the grounds of Glengormley Youth Centre and provides support to primary schools and children, in the form of 'in class' behaviour support assistance, individual teaching sessions and training, advice and resources to staff. The children can attend for up to two days each week, for up to three terms, with support from a behaviour support assistant or teacher when they are attending school. The unit is managed by a full time senior teacher, appointed in January 2016, and is overseen by the Area Head of Alternative Education. Additional staff comprise of two part-time teachers, five part-time Behaviour Support Assistants and a part-time clerical officer.

Lea Green Primary PRU	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	11	10	10	7
Enrolment outreach	43	45	53	24
% Attendance	95%	96%	85%	91
FSME Percentage ¹	50%	80%	90%	86%
Newcomers	0	0	0	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Important areas for improvement
Achievements and outcomes	Important areas for improvement
Provision for learning	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement
Outreach Support	Important areas for improvement

5. Achievements and outcomes

- The children are confident, respectful and courteous; are learning to manage their relationships with their peers; engage well with the staff; and most of them can sustain their attention when actively engaged in their learning.
- While the behaviour of most of the children in the unit, and those receiving outreach support, was good, the inconsistent use of behaviour management strategies does not enable the children to develop the skills and dispositions required to achieve their behavioural targets.
- In the current year, the unit's data indicates that in the two months prior to the inspection the majority of the key stage (KS) 2 children have an attendance greater than 80% and in KS 1 most had attendance of more than 90%.
- The work in the children's books demonstrates that their literacy and numeracy skills are important areas for improvement. The children complete the work provided by their referring school but their progression in literacy and numeracy is not robustly monitored.

6. Provision

- There is a warm and nurturing environment within the unit with effective working relationships between the children and staff that ensures they are welcomed and supported in developing their social skills and capacity to manage their behaviour. Each day begins with breakfast and social time, which enables the staff to assess the children's readiness to learn, thereby facilitating a positive start to the day.

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

- The planning for learning is an important area for improvement. In the less effective practice, the short-term planning does not focus adequately on the children's interests and there is insufficient differentiation in the learning to meet effectively the needs of the children. The evaluations of the impact of the learning vary in quality and are not focussed on each child to inform effectively the next stage of learning.
- Most of the learning and teaching observed during the inspection was good. The effective lessons were characterised by an appropriate emphasis on the development of social skills, such as 'turn-taking' and through the use of social stories and puppets the children engage in learning new behaviours with topics and themes based on their interests, and the use of self-assessments to demonstrate their strengths and progress. In the less effective practice, in a small number of lessons, the pace of the lesson was too slow, the learning outcomes were not clear and behaviour management strategies were not consistently reinforced.
- The children benefit from a broad curriculum including the world around us, art, music and yoga. Their timetables have a number of short and varied activities to maintain the children's attention and are used well to settle and prepare them for learning after key transition points, such as break.
- While the staff demonstrate high levels of patience in their interactions with the children, the behaviour of a small number is not appropriately challenged and individualised behaviour management strategies were not applied consistently.
- The lack of therapeutic input from the educational psychology service has hindered the development of individualised learning programmes with cognitive behavioural strategies to help the children reflect, understand their behaviour, and acquire important skills such as self-management and resilience.
- The provision for literacy and numeracy is an important area for improvement. The unit has insufficient appropriate numeracy and literacy resources; this is impacting negatively on the children's learning and the ability of staff to deliver effective differentiation. While the staff have recognised the importance of following the referring school's planning for literacy and numeracy to develop consistency in the learning experiences for each child, a majority of schools do not share planning regularly, which creates gaps in the children's learning. As a consequence, this impedes the unit staff in preparing the children for lessons in their referring school.
- In all of the schools visited, the outreach tutors were able to discuss individually and in detail the children, their needs and their progress. The unit tutors maintain effective detailed records of communication with schools and parents. They monitor and record regularly the children's response to the intervention strategies used. It is important that the mainstream teachers communicate more effectively with the unit staff each week on the progress of the children when they attend school to enable a more individualised behavioural programme for each child to be developed and to respond to issues and incidents in a timely manner.

- The staff in the unit effectively track the progress of the children when they move to post primary provision or when they return full-time to their referring school. They support the children well when they re-integrate back to school however the provision of a re-integration booklet outlining appropriate support strategies would assist schools in providing a more effective transition process.
- The staff in the unit produce highly effective individual behaviour plans which identify appropriate targets and strategies. While the staff complete baseline assessments with each child, the assessment of the children's emotions and behaviour are underdeveloped and do not inform the plans and enable the staff to monitor the effectiveness and impact of the interventions. It is important that the staff assess regularly the progress the children are making in their work and in managing their behaviour and emotions.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. There is a caring, nurturing ethos. All staff demonstrate through their actions sensitive and effective care for the children and support them well to manage their emotional and anxiety difficulties. The staff encourage them and are committed to ensuring that the children and their parent(s) or guardian receive any additional support required.
- The staff in the unit give good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, with, for example, visits to the supermarket to learn about healthy eating and diets; and programmes which develop their knowledge of hygiene and keeping safe.

7. Leadership and management

- There is a clear strategic vision for the development of the unit and outreach service; the senior teacher effectively manages the daily running of the unit and the outreach support service, and is highly dedicated to the well-being and education of the children. She prioritises the development of positive working relationships with the children, parents, staff and referring schools. Although there has been a timely review of the provision and a revision of some of the unit's essential policies there is no service level agreement with schools in place to guide and support the work of the unit.
- The senior management within the Education Authority have not effectively addressed the lack of appropriate resources, including information and communication technology equipment, within the unit and outreach service to enable it to meet the needs of the children. The current accommodation is in need of repair with limited facilities and is isolated from all other support agencies.
- The unit and outreach service are governed by the Behaviour Support Service Management Group comprising of officers from the Education Authority. Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection the parents and staff can have limited confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The Education Authority should consider how to facilitate greater involvement of local referring schools and parents in supporting the work of the unit and outreach service with representation on the Behaviour Support Service Management Group.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the unit has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. In discussions with the inspectors, the children reported that they feel safe while attending the unit and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. The following areas, however, need to be addressed: to ensure the draft relationships and sexuality, positive behaviour and intimate care policies including the code of conduct for staff are ratified by the governance group.

8. Overall effectiveness

Lea Green Primary Referral Unit and Behaviour Support Outreach Service needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners. In particular there is a need to:

- develop further the planning for lessons to ensure the targets and strategies within the behaviour plans are communicated to the children consistently based on the progress reports from the referring schools to the unit each week;
- develop individual intensive therapeutic programmes with support from the educational psychology service to address the complex needs and behaviours of the children; and
- ensure all draft policies including the code of conduct for staff are ratified by the governance group and an effective service level agreement is in place with the referring schools.

The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

Accommodation

1. The exterior of the mobile classroom is in a very poor state of repair with sections of the outer partition of the building damaged, as a result the building is no longer weatherproof and sections of the supporting structure are exposed.
2. The main entrance door to the mobile is in a poor state of repair and requires remedial action to ensure the safety and security of the building.

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