

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Banana Bunch Playgroup,
Whitehead, County Antrim

Report of a Follow-up inspection
in January 2018



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



FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF BANANA BUNCH PLAYGROUP, WHITEHEAD, COUNTY ANTRIM, BT38 9PU (3AB-0106)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Banana Bunch Playgroup in October 2016¹ which concluded that the school need to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all learners. The areas for improvement were to

- develop a more consistently high quality of staff interaction to promote learning among the whole staff team;
- build further the skill and capacity of the staff to identify, plan for and support effectively children identified with special educational needs; and
- define more clearly the roles and responsibilities of the leadership and management including a more collegial approach to self-evaluation and development planning.

The playgroup's action plans were of a good quality and were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in May 2017 and a follow-up inspection in January 2018.

In the interval since the initial inspection follow-up inspection, the following actions or changes which affect the work of the playgroup have taken place:

- the large hall used by the playgroup for indoor physical play is unavailable for use due to extensive renovation work being carried out;
- the leader has received support from the Education Authority Inclusion Service; and
- the staff and the committee have undergone relevant training.

Key Findings

The outcomes for learners remain good. A majority of the children are well motivated and highly engaged in their learning; they are more confident to initiate and sustain their own their play as they investigate and explore the well-presented resources. The children identified as requiring additional support with their learning are making progress with individual support from the staff. On the day of the visit the physical energetic play was restricted by the limited space available. The staff need to develop more effective alternatives during the current unavailability of the large hall.

The quality of provision remains an important area for improvement. The assessment information is not yet comprehensive enough or being used consistently enough to guide the staff in their planning for specific children. The Independent Early years Specialist (IEYS) has appropriately identified planning and assessment as an area for continued focus and staff development. The quality of the staff interaction is of a consistently high quality to promote the children's learning during the period of freely chosen play. The staff take a more child led approach and support well the children's independent choices, creativity and exploration. They model a good range of vocabulary and mathematical language and ask open ended questions to promote the children's thinking skills. The absence of younger children on the day of the visit enabled the staff to give focused support to individuals and groups of children.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/preschool-inspection-banana-bunch-playgroup-whitehead-county-antrim-3ab-0106.pdf>

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement are now good. The staff are participating in relevant training and support to build their skills and as result are implementing their special educational needs policy more effectively. Their understanding of the code of practice and individual education plans is developing well; the children on the register are making progress. There is more effective communication between the committee, staff and IEYS about improvements being made and priorities for further development. The committee have undertaken training to equip them in their role.

Banana Bunch Playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all learners. The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement in:

- making comprehensive assessments of the children's progress and using this information to plan the next steps in learning for individual children; and
- making interim arrangements for energetic physical play during the renovations of the hall.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2018

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk