

EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION

Derrytrasna Playgroup, Craigavon,  
County Armagh

Voluntary Playgroup DE Ref No (5BB-0416)

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in May 2022



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## Follow-up to the inspection of Derrytrasna Playgroup, Craigavon, BT66 6NR (5BB-0416)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a third follow-up inspection of Derrytrasna Playgroup in June 2019<sup>1</sup>, which concluded that the pre-school needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement were to:

- improve the learning outcomes for the children through the provision of a more challenging pre-school curriculum;
- develop further the short-term and outdoor play planning to identify more clearly the learning potential and the role of the adult and to use the observations of the children's learning to inform the planning; and
- demonstrate clearly the impact of the improvement work on raising the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the children.

The pre-school's action plans were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI. The pre-school's development plan was also adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out a monitoring visit in May 2021 and a fourth follow-up inspection in May 2022.

In the interval since the third follow-up inspection, the pre-school has received external support from the Early Years Organisation (EYO) through a 12-week intensive support programme; training through local pre-school clusters; the facilitation of a visit by staff to another pre-school setting to observe the provision and practice; and, training for the management committee.

Also, during this period, other key actions or changes which affect the work of the school include:

- the appointment of a new chairperson and management committee and a new pre-school manager to oversee the work of the playgroup;
- allocated time provided for the staff to plan together;
- the use of Engage funding to access the services of an independent speech and language therapist; and
- the participation of staff in a pilot programme, provided by the Special Education Needs Early Years Inclusion Service to support pre-school children with additional needs.

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<sup>1</sup> [Follow-up Inspection – Derrytrasna Playgroup, Craigavon, County Armagh](#)

## Key findings

The outcomes for learners are now good. All of the children are well-settled and engage in productive play alongside and with their peers. Most of the children play with concentration for sustained periods of time; accessing independently resources they need and sharing these with their peers. They are curious when exploring the outdoor area and talk confidently with adults and each other about their learning. Those children who have additional learning needs are integrated well and are making good progress in their language development and in managing their behaviour and emotions. The staff have identified appropriately that the children's creativity requires further development. The children's representational drawings are underdeveloped for the time of year.

The quality of provision is now good. Through effective teamwork and collaboration between the staff and the management committee, the outdoor provision has been transformed. The attractive and stimulating learning environment provides enhanced opportunities for the children to develop their knowledge and skills across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Through their skilful interactions, the staff promote well the children's language development and positive behaviour. There is a collegial approach to planning and a more rigorous and systematic approach to observation and assessment of the children's learning across all areas of the curriculum. The staff are trialling to good effect a different format to record the children's learning and inform future planning, and they have identified appropriately the need to embed this process.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement are now good. The staff team are evaluating the impact of the actions to promote improvement on the quality of the children's learning experiences and have identified appropriate areas to improve further the quality of the provision. Through the successful implementation of an online application there is better communication with parents, who through feedback have indicated that they have an enhanced understanding of the progress of their children and the work of the playgroup. The staff have been proactive in accessing a range of professional development opportunities, including collaboration with health professionals, to support those children who have additional needs. Through working closely with an independent speech and language therapist, the staff have been upskilled in using a range of strategies and approaches to support effectively those children who have speech and language difficulties and enable them to make good progress. While the staff have benefited from support by the EYO in the last few years, there have been a significant number of changes in early year specialist personnel and inconsistent support since September 2021.

## Overall effectiveness

Derrytrasna Playgroup now demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the pre-school sustains improvement in:

- embedding the process of using observations of the children's learning to inform the planning process.

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