

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION

Kids Kabin Playgroup, Castlewellan,  
County Down

Voluntary, DE Ref No 4AB-0176

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in January 2023



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## Follow-up to the inspection of Kids Kabin Playgroup, Castlewellan, BT31 9PQ (4AB-0176)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Kids Kabin Playgroup in October 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, namely to:

- address the instability in staffing in order to provide high quality learning experiences for all of the children;
- appoint an Early Years' Specialist with the necessary experience and skill to support the staff;
- improve the quality, planning and assessment of the pre-school curriculum;
- improve the quality of the staff interactions to promote the children's learning;
- review the organisation of the day to make the most effective use of the time available;
- improve the skills and knowledge of leadership and management to monitor and evaluate effectively the quality of the provision; and
- address the unsatisfactory safeguarding.

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.

ETI evaluated the progress in addressing the unsatisfactory arrangements for safeguarding in November 2019. On the basis of that evaluation, the unsatisfactory safeguarding arrangements had been addressed and that the safeguarding provision reflected broadly the guidance issued by the relevant departments.

The ETI carried out a monitoring visit in May 2021 and a follow-up inspection in January 2023.

In the interval since the inspection, the pre-school has received external support from the Early Years Organisation (EYO) through virtual and on-site visits by the Early Years Specialist (EYS). The pre-school was unable to access a 12-week intensive support programme from the EYS due to the pandemic.

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<sup>1</sup> [Pre-School Inspection - Kids Kabin Pre-School, Castlewellan, County Down 4AB-0176 \(etini.gov.uk\)](https://etini.gov.uk/pre-school-inspection-kids-kabin-pre-school-castlewellan-county-down-4ab-0176)

Over the same period, the key actions or changes which have affected the work of the pre-school include the:

- appointment of a deputy leader and an Early Years Specialist (EYS) from the EYO;
- deputy leader completing a level 5 qualification in Management and Leadership in Childcare;
- addition of timetabled staff planning time; and
- introduction of the Seesaw app to facilitate communication with parents.

As a consequence of the external support and the key changes and actions taken within the pre-school, there have been improvements in the quality of education as reported in the key findings below.

## Key findings

### **The outcomes for learners have improved and are now good.**

All of the children are well-settled and most of them follow well the routines of the pre-school. They choose where to play, access and share the resources, and play alongside and with their peers. The children's self-help skills are developed appropriately for the time of year. Most of the children enjoy conversing with their peers and adults during play and snack time and are developing a good range of vocabulary. They listen well during story time and participate enthusiastically in the rhymes and songs. The children are particularly interested in creative play; they paint, engage in imaginative play in the role play corner and experiment with a range of resources which are easily accessible. A very small number of children require support to tidy away toys and transition between activities.

### **The quality of provision has improved but important areas for improvement remain.**

The quality of provision has improved but the planning and assessment still have important areas for improvement. While the staff make regular observations of the children's learning, the written observations and assessments are not used meaningfully enough to inform the future planning. The current curriculum planning for outdoor play is underdeveloped and does not provide sufficient opportunities for the children to progress their learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff have made good progress in the development of their short-term planning for indoor play which now outlines more clearly the intended learning and the role of the staff. This has led to improved staff interactions where staff promote better the children's language and personal, social and emotional skills. The staff have reviewed the organisation of the day which has resulted in more sustained and uninterrupted play and improved personal, social and emotional development of the children. All of the staff have a very good relationship with the children and use praise, encouragement and positive behaviour strategies when engaging with the children.

### **The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement has improved but important areas for improvement remain.**

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement has improved but still has important areas for improvement. While the leadership and staff have made some improvements to the playgroup, they do not have a clear enough understanding of the process of self-evaluation and the impact of their improvement work on the outcomes for the children. During the follow-up inspection, there was insufficient evidence to show that the management committee are exercising their support and challenge function effectively enough, through monitoring closely the work of the playgroup. There is now a suitably qualified staff team in place who work closely with the EYS and have identified appropriate areas for improvement which are outlined in the playgroup's action plans.

## **Overall effectiveness**

Kids Kabin Playgroup needs to continue to address important areas for improvement in the interests of the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

The areas for improvement are the:

- effective use of the assessments of the children's learning to inform planning for progression across the six areas of the curriculum;
- continued development of the process of self-evaluation so the staff can effect demonstrable improvement on the quality of the provision and the outcomes of the children; and
- strengthening of the leadership of the management committee to enable them to monitor and evaluate more effectively the quality of the provision.

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

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