

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Kirkinriola Early Years, Ballymena, County Antrim

Voluntary playgroup DE Ref No (3BB-0136)

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in June 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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CUSTOMER
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FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF KIRKINRIOLA EARLY YEARS, BALLYMENA, BT43 6TB (3BB-0136)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Kirkinriola Early Years in February 2018¹, which concluded that the school needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement were:

- to use the staff's observations and assessments more systematically to inform the planning for learning; and
- for the leadership and management to develop further the use of self-evaluation and development planning to bring about further improvement.

The pre-school's development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in January 2019 and a follow-up inspection in June 2019.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the pre-school has received external support provided by an early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation, in relation to: planning, observation, assessment, self-evaluation and development planning. Consequently, there have been improvements in the quality of education as reported in the key findings below.

During this period, other actions or changes which affect the work of the pre-school include:

- there is a new leadership team;
- the pre-school has engaged the services of an early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation (EYO); and
- the staff and directors have undergone training and reviewed and updated relevant policies and procedures.

Key findings

- The outcomes for learners are now very good. The children manage all transitions very well and have high levels of independence. They spend lengthy periods of time in challenging and sustained play, both individually and collaboratively. Almost all of the children are inquisitive, highly motivated learners; they explore their environment with enthusiasm using their senses to describe, explore, and make predictions using natural materials such as grass, seaweed, compost and shells. Nearly all of the children have a very good understanding of early mathematical concepts and use appropriate mathematical language in various contexts across the areas of play.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/pre-school-inspection-kirkinriola-early-years-ballymena-county-antrim>

- The quality of provision remains good. The staff have effectively implemented a new approach to the cycle of planning, observations and assessment. They make regular, appropriate observations and assessments of the children's interests and learning and use these to inform short-term planning and provide a range of interesting activities that allow children to investigate, solve problems and develop perseverance. Early mathematical language is now planned for and modelled more effectively by a majority of the staff. The quality of the interactions between the staff and children remain variable; there are missed opportunities to promote scientific language. More effective use of the outdoor space, has begun to impact positively on the learning opportunities for the children; however outdoor planning is underdeveloped.
- The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement are now good. The staff team and directors work well collegially and they regularly reflect on their practice. The early years specialist provides clear guidance and very good support for improvement, as a result, the staff have a greater understanding of self-evaluation and the development planning process; however, this work is not yet fully embedded. Appropriate priorities have been identified and incorporated into the three-year development plan.

Overall effectiveness

Kirkinriola Early Years 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 in:

- embedding further the processes of self-evaluation and action planning to bring about further improvement in the provision.

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management²:

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

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

² And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

Overall effectiveness

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

<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the 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.</p>

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