

Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Little Oaks Playgroup, Portadown, County Armagh

Voluntary playgroup DE Ref No: 5AB-0504

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in November 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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Introduction

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Little Oaks Playgroup in May 2018¹, which concluded that the playgroup needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are to:

- develop the planning and provision for all areas of learning, in particular, the Arts and the World Around Us;
- use the observations to inform the short-term planning to meet better the children's differing needs; and
- improve self-evaluation and demonstrate the impact of the improvement work on the provision leading to better outcomes for the children.

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

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in December 2018 and a follow-up inspection in November 2019.

During this period, other actions or changes which affect the work of the playgroup include:

- the appointment of an independent early years' specialist in August 2019; and
- staff availing of a number of professional development opportunities.

Key findings

The quality of provision is now good. The planned programme provides good opportunities across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The increased range of authentic and natural resources incorporated across indoor and outdoor areas has led to greater experimentation and higher levels of sustained and purposeful play by the children. There are more open-ended opportunities for children to develop their creativity in the Arts resulting in good levels of engagement and enjoyment in learning. The short-term planning is appropriately informed by the staff's observation and assessment of the children. The role of the adult is more clearly identified within the short-term planning which has impacted positively on the quality of the adult interactions with the children. Where these are most effective, the staff are skilful in using open-ended questions to develop the children's problem solving and observational skills. The quality of the interactions are not yet consistently effective resulting in a small number of missed opportunities to develop the children's learning. The staff have identified appropriately the need to develop further the outdoor area.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement are now good. The staff are reflective in their practice and have processes in place to identify areas for improvement. Action plans support the improvement process. Working collegially with the recently appointed independent early years' specialist, the staff have effected improvements in the provision within a short space of time. While the staff have begun to measure the impact of the improvement work on the provision and the outcomes for the children, this requires further development.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/preschool-inspection-little-oaks-preschool-portadown-county-armagh-5ab-0504.pdf>

Overall effectiveness

Little Oaks Playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement in: using self-evaluation to measure the impact of improvement work undertaken.

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