

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Tir-na-nÓg Pre-school Playgroup
Ballyclare, County Antrim**

May 2016

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF TIR NA NOG PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP, BALLYCLARE (3BB-0250)

The original inspection carried out in March 2015 concluded that in most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this playgroup was satisfactory; the strengths outweighed areas for improvement in the provision.

The most important areas for improvement were to:

- identify more clearly the full range of learning potential in the play activities and ensure sufficient and systematic progression in the children's learning across all aspects of the pre-school curriculum;
- develop a more systematic approach to assessing the children's progress and use this information to meet their needs more fully; and
- for the leadership and management to develop more effective self-evaluation, action planning and associated staff development to inform continuous improvement.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a monitoring visit during 2015 with a follow-up inspection on the 11 May 2016.

The action plans received by the Department of Education following the inspection were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI during the interim visit.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the following key actions, which affect the work of the playgroup, have taken place:

- a new independent early years specialist has been appointed; and
- the staff have attended a range of relevant staff development and training.

Key findings

- The leader has completed leadership and management training and she is implementing her training well to strengthen her role within the playgroup. The early years specialist provides very good support which contributes significantly to building the capacity and confidence of the staff and management committee to bring about improvement in the provision.
- The staff meet regularly as a whole staff team to build an effective, collegial approach to planning and assessment. They are reflective in their practice; they make regular and meaningful evaluations of the children's learning and implement relevant aspects of their training and staff development to improve their interactions and skills. The staff have identified relevant priorities for future development.
- There is clear evidence of the improvement in the quality of the overall programme which is of a good to very good standard across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. There are higher levels of sustained imaginative, exploratory and creative play by the children and better opportunities for energetic play.

- The staff interaction is consistently of a high standard; it supports settled play, builds and extends very effectively the children's own ideas and promotes their thinking and early mathematical language.

Overall effectiveness

Tir-na-nÓg Pre-school Playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

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