

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Teconnaught Cross-Community
Playgroup, Crossgar

Report of an Inspection
in January 2013

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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Teconnaught Cross Community Playgroup
Address:	1 Drumnaconagher Road Teconnaught Crossgar DOWNPATRICK BT30 9AN
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	30 January 2013
Date of previous inspection:	26 April 2005

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	20	-
in their immediate pre-school year	20	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	20	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	20	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	5	-
with English as an additional language	0	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
Attendance:		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	93 %	-

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	1
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	1
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session	Number of days open in previous year
2½ hours	-	185

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	20
Percentage returned	50%
Number of written comments:	5

1. Introduction

Teconnaught Cross Community Playgroup is situated in the Teconnaught Community Hall, Teconnaught, Crossgar, Downpatrick. Most of the children come from the surrounding rural area.

2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations and from a range of documentation provided by the playgroup.

The views of the parents, staff, and management group were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Twenty questionnaires were issued to the parents and ten were returned with five written comments. All of the staff and all members of the management group returned the questionnaires with written comments. All of the returns from the questionnaires indicated very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the work of the playgroup. The parents highlighted their appreciation of the high quality of the provision, their children's enjoyment of the learning opportunities and the staff's attention to supporting children who have particular learning needs. The reporting inspector discussed the responses and the comments with the staff, leader and a member of the management group who attended the oral report back.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The playgroup has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Outstanding Outstanding Outstanding
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's Achievements

The quality of the children's achievements is outstanding.

- Almost all of the children engage in purposeful play with their peers across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Many of the children make independent choices from a very good range of additional resources readily available to them to sustain their play.
- The children make significant progress regarding their knowledge and understanding of early technological, scientific and mathematical skills through the range of play activities provided for them by the staff. They design, create and construct their own ideas through access to a very good range of materials.

The children develop an interest in early reading through the excellent story-telling session and their exploration of books, in particular, information books, during their play. The children play imaginatively during role play opportunities in the café and the building site areas and they practise their early mark making through a very good range of writing and drawing materials.

5. Provision for Learning

The quality of the provision for learning is outstanding.

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is outstanding. The very positive working relationships at all levels foster an inclusive and supportive family ethos throughout the playgroup. The staff guide and develop well the children who require support with their emotional needs. The children's behaviour is exemplary reflecting the high expectations of the staff and the consistent application of the agreed positive behaviour approaches by all staff.
- The children respond well to the stimulating learning environment; examples of the children's paintings, photographs and topical displays enhance the playroom and reinforce the children's learning. There are outstanding learning opportunities in all aspects of the pre-school curriculum; of significant note are the development of the children's personal, social and emotional well-being and language skills.
- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is always very good and, at times, is outstanding.
- There are excellent methods of planning and assessment. The planning is systematic and the staff make appropriate use of the planned and spontaneous learning activities to respond to individual children's interests and needs. The staff make effective use of their observations to assess the children's progress; to identify individual children's needs and to create more challenge and progression in the children's learning.
- The parents are kept well informed through monthly newsletters and the relevant reports on their child's progress. The staff report that there are effective transition links with the local primary school.
- The playgroup gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity; for example, through the healthy snack routines and the regular and wide range of opportunities for outdoor play, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

6. Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The co-leaders demonstrate excellent leadership and management capabilities and they are ably supported by the highly motivated and skilled staff team. The management committee, co-leaders, staff and parents work collaboratively to ensure a very high quality of pre-school provision which is valued by the local community.

- The staff implement effective self-evaluation processes which enable them to review the quality of the provision and to identify key priorities for the playgroup's continued development. They receive a very good quality of professional advice from the independent early years specialist (EYS). Currently, the members of staff are focusing appropriately on the further development of the children's early scientific skills and concepts. They have developed effectively the Media Initiative Project and have engaged fully with the parents and the children in the philosophy of the programme and through on-going evaluations of its out-workings.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The playgroup has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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