

# Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



## 174 Trust Playgroup, Belfast

Voluntary Playgroup DE ref no (1AB-0427)

Report of an Inspection in January 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



# CONTENTS

| <b>Section</b>                        | <b>Page</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Context                            | 1           |
| 2. Views of parents and staff         | 1           |
| 3. Focus of the inspection            | 1           |
| 4. Overall findings of the inspection | 1           |
| 5. Outcomes for learners              | 2           |
| 6. Quality of provision               | 2           |
| 7. Leadership and management          | 3           |
| 8. Safeguarding                       | 3           |
| 9. Overall effectiveness              | 4           |

## **Appendices**

- A. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- B. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

## 1. Context

174 Trust Playgroup is a project which forms part of the 174 Trust. The playgroup operates within the 174 Trust building and has the use of a large playroom and access to a hall and sizeable outdoor space. The children attending the playgroup come from the surrounding area. Since the last inspection in 2014 a new leader and assistant have been appointed.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Number of children:</b>  |    |
| Attending part-time   | 16 |
| Under 3 years of age*   | 2  |
| Funded by Department of Education   | 13 |
| With statement of special educational needs   | 0  |
| Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs | 1  |
| With English as an additional language  | 0  |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Average percentage attendance for the previous year. | 78  |
| Number of days open in previous school year          | 185 |

**Source:** data provided by the setting.

\* On 1 July.

\*\* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

# fewer than 5

N/A not available

## 2. Views of parents and staff

Half of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. In a small number of written comments, the parents highlighted the caring staff and the progress made by their children since starting the playgroup. The staff highlighted the good working relationships among the staff team. The questionnaire responses were shared with the leader and the secretary of the Trust Management Committee.

## 3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all learners, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- outcomes for the children;
- quality of provision for learning; and
- leadership and management.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>     | <b>Capacity to identify and bring about improvement</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Outcomes for learners</b>     | Good  |
| <b>Quality of provision</b>      | Good  |
| <b>Leadership and management</b> | Good  |

## **5. Outcomes for learners**

- All of the children, including those who require support with aspects of their learning, are making good progress across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. They settle quickly to their chosen activities and engage purposefully throughout the session. The children are well-behaved and the majority of them share the resources while engaging in collaborative play; particularly in the home and building areas and while playing as pirates outdoors.
- The children are confident in the routines of the playgroup and have good levels of independence; accessing the resources they need for their play, serving their snack and washing their cups and plates afterwards. The majority of the children can put on their own coats and boots for outdoor play with minimal adult support.
- The children listen well in group story time and join enthusiastically in rhymes and songs. Their interest in browsing in books and engaging in early mark making is less well developed. The children label their own work and a small number are beginning to write their own name. Their ability to problem solve independently is not sufficiently developed.
- Most of the children understand some early mathematical concepts including aspects of number, measures and shape. During the inspection, a small number of children engaged in sorting by colour or type. The children have good fine-motor skills and develop well their gross motor skills outdoors through climbing, running, throwing and kicking a ball and pedalling wheeled vehicles.
- The children have a good interest in the world around us and engage in discussions with the adults about what plants and seeds need to grow and recall enthusiastically a recent visit to the nearby Waterworks area.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- The staff have created a bright, welcoming environment which provides good and very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The recent focus on the development of the outdoor play area has greatly improved the quality of the resources outdoors. The quality of adult interactions with the children is a key strength of the provision. The staff are effective in developing vocabulary with the children and promoting enjoyment and curiosity in learning.
- The short-term planning for both indoor and outdoor play does not identify effectively enough both the intended learning and the role of the adult in supporting progression. The staff make good use of an electronic app to record photographs and observations of the children and make appropriate evaluations of their learning in their additional notes. There is variation in how well this information is used to inform the future planning.
- The children who have additional learning needs are identified early and the staff work effectively with both the parents and external agencies to provide appropriate support.

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning and teaching, and the outcomes for the children. The consistent use of positive behaviour strategies by the staff has resulted in the children being well-behaved and confident in the setting.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leader and staff work well collaboratively as a team with a shared vision to provide high quality learning experiences for all of the children. They value highly the importance of ongoing professional development opportunities through accredited courses and qualifications, visits to other settings and engaging in cluster groups to share good practice. Regular staff appraisals are used well as an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice and on-going needs. The result is that the staff are knowledgeable and focused on continuous development.
- The staff have made good use of range of self-evaluation strategies, including audits and the views of the children, to identify appropriate areas for improvement. The current three-year development plan lacks detail and the action plans are too focused on the acquisition of resources. The staff have identified the need to reflect more on evaluating the impact of the actions to promote improvement on the outcomes for the children and the quality of the provision.
- The leader and staff are supported by the management group. One member of the management group is in daily contact with the playgroup staff and provides the management group with updates from the leader. The leader does not currently have an opportunity to provide these updates in person.
- The playgroup has had three different early years specialists from the Early Years Organisation since the last inspection which has impacted on the consistency of the support. The current early years specialist is aware of the needs of the staff and is working well to support them in developing the outdoor area.
- There are very good links with the parents who are kept well informed by the monthly newsletters and updates on their child's experiences through the app. The parent group engages in valuable fund raising activities which have contributed recently to the improvements in the outdoor play area. The wide range of visitors to the setting and educational visits have enhanced the children's learning experiences. The playgroup has links with the local Sure Start, other playgroups and feeder primary schools.

## **8. Safeguarding**

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the relevant Departments. However, the playgroup needs to:
  - update its policies on child protection, positive behaviour and anti-bullying;
  - improve the procedures for recording whether or not there have been any allegations of a safeguarding nature against any members of staff.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

174 Trust Playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the children.

There are areas for improvement that the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The areas for improvement are:

- to develop the planning for indoor and outdoor play and identify more clearly both the intended learning and the role of the adult in supporting progression; and
- to develop further the action planning process and evaluate more effectively the impact of the actions to promote improvement on the outcomes for the children and the quality of the provision.

The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

### Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/inspection-and-self-evaluation-framework-isef-effective-practice-and-self-evaluation>.

Inspectors observed learning and teaching through play, the children's achievements, progression and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, and held formal and informal discussions with staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with those involved with leadership and management, including the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

## 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 management<sup>1</sup>:

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| 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 |

<sup>1</sup> 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:

|  |
|--|
| 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.   |
| 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.  |
| 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.   |
| 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. |

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2019

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)