

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Ahoghill and District Community
Pre-School Playgroup, Ahoghill,
County Antrim

Report of an Inspection in
June 2016

eti

The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing Inspection Services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
Department for Communities



Quantitative terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on Leadership and management:

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

Overall effectiveness

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

The nursery school / playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school / playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school /playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school/ playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school/ playgroup needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's/ playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The nursery school / playgroup needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's / playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

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1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school settings, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors observed learning and teaching through play, the children's achievements and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, and held formal and informal discussions with children, and 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 confidential questionnaires.

All of the staff and a small number of parents completed the confidential questionnaires; the responses were wholly positive. The parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the work of the playgroup. In particular, they commented on the friendly staff and the children's enjoyment during the session. All of the findings from the questionnaires were shared and discussed with the representatives from the management group and the staff.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, the purpose of inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to evaluate the:

- children's achievements and standards;
- quality of provision for learning; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Ahoghill and District Community Pre-school Playgroup is accommodated within Ahoghill Community Centre in the centre of the village. The playgroup provides a part-time morning session for pre-school children. At the time of inspection, twenty-four children were attending the playgroup. The centre is used by other community groups and, as a result, the staff have to set up and clear away the playgroup resources on a daily basis.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are very well settled, engage in collaborative play and display very good behaviour. They are familiar with the daily routines and move easily between the playroom and adjacent hall which is used for physical play. The children assume responsibilities readily, for example, preparing the snack and helping tidy up after the session.
- The children display an interest in books during free play, listen attentively to the story at the group story session and respond well to adult questioning. Their representational drawings are of good quality, all of the children are able to recognise their own name and a minority of children are able to write their name. The children need greater opportunities to engage in early mark making.
- The quality of the children's mathematical concepts is very well developed. They use mathematical language with confidence across all areas of the pre-school curriculum and were observed sorting, counting, using positional language and comparing and contrasting objects for size and colour.

6. Provision for learning

- The staff have worked diligently to create a stimulating and safe learning environment within the shared space; the play areas are demarcated clearly and organised carefully to allow the children free choice and easy access to the resources which promote their independence. The children's own creations are valued and celebrated in displays within the playroom.
- The children's educational programme is well-balanced with good opportunities for learning in most areas of the pre-school curriculum. The planning guides well the work of the staff; they operate a key-worker system and have compiled informative records of the children's learning. The staff need to link more closely the planning and observation information to ensure clear progression in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The outdoor area needs to be developed to extend the children's learning opportunities particularly with regard to the World Around Us.
- The staff interactions are of a very good quality. They engage easily, support appropriately the children and extend their thinking through effective questioning and encouragement.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. A welcoming, caring ethos influences the work of the playgroup. The staff know the children well and respond with care to their needs and interests.
- The children with additional needs are well integrated and making good progress in the areas identified as requiring support. The leader has benefitted from the Early Years Special Educational Needs Capacity Building and staff incorporate effectively, into their daily practice, many of the strategies and techniques developed during their training.

- The staff give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, through the healthy break and the daily opportunity for energetic physical activity which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- There is a collaborative team approach within the playgroup and a commitment by staff to provide a safe, stimulating environment for the children. The leader is an effective role model and is supported well by her staff and management group in the evaluation and development of the playgroup's provision and all areas of the life and work of the playgroup. The staff are beginning to use the process of self evaluation to promote improvement in the pre-school programme and have appropriately identified the need to develop the outdoor area within the current development plan. The associated action plans need to be developed further to focus more specifically on the children's learning needs.
- The playgroup has developed very good links with the parents through an informative induction meeting and regular newsletters. The parents participate in the variety of fundraising activities and educational trips throughout the year and have been invited to share their work and cultural interests with the children. Good links have been established with the local primary school to which a number of children transfer to their year one class.
- The independent early years specialist has provided good professional support for the staff in assisting them develop their medium-term planners and methods of observation.
- The pre-school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Overall effectiveness

Ahoghill and District Community Pre-school Playgroup demonstrates 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, in particular, the need to ensure observations impact on future planning to support the needs of all children.

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON AHOGHILL AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY
PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP, AHOGHILL**

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	24
Attending part-time	
Under 3 years of age*	
Funded by Department of Education	24
With statement of special educational needs	
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	1
With English as an additional language	
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	

* On 1 July.

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

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	0
Average attendance for the previous year.	80%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	9.00 am-12.00 noon	

3. Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders		3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		4
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		0
New appointments within the previous 12 months		1

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	

*** Total placements since September of current year

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