

# Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



## Ballinderry Playgroup, Coagh, County Tyrone

Voluntary pre-school playgroup DE Ref No: 5AB-0217

Report of an Inspection in October 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER  
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EXCELLENCE



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## 1. Context

Ballinderry Playgroup is situated in a community hall in Ballinderry on the outskirts of Coagh, Cookstown. The children come mainly from the local area. There are have been changes in leadership roles since the last inspection.

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>
Attending part-time	26
Funded by Department of Education	26
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At Cop stages 1 or 2	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	0%
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	97%
Number of days open in previous school year	186

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

# fewer than 5

\*On 1 July past

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

## 2. Views of parents and staff

Twenty-three percent of the parents responded to the questionnaire and their responses were all positive about the life and work of the pre-school. The small number of written comments praised highly the friendly staff and the welcoming atmosphere. All the staff completed the staff questionnaire and their responses were highly affirming of the work of the staff. A summary of the questionnaire responses was shared with the leadership and a representative of the 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>Important areas for improvement</b>
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
<b>Quality of provision</b>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Important areas for improvement

## **5. Outcomes for learners**

- The children make good progress across most areas of the pre-school curriculum. They are well-settled and all stay for the full duration of the session.
- The children are familiar with the routines of the day, self-register on arrival and choose freely where to play. Most of the children have very good turn-taking and social skills and a minority are beginning to play co-operatively. They are forming friendships with one another and are confident to engage with adults.
- Throughout the session, the children enjoy singing nursery rhymes and making music. They show an interest in books and are attentive with good listening skills in the large group story session. The children's early mark making and drawing skills are starting to emerge and they are beginning to recognise symbols and their own names.
- The children compare the weights of vegetables, sort and match during home corner play. Mathematical language during incidental play is used appropriately by the children and they show an awareness of counting in the construction area.
- The children use confidently a range of fine motor skills to paint, draw, pour and fill containers. In the outdoors, the children gain good gross motor skills when using a range of wheeled toys.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- The overall quality of the provision has important areas of improvement. The children's opportunities for creativity across the curriculum and to investigate within the World Around Us area of learning are underdeveloped.
- The quality of the staff interaction is too variable to sustain high quality learning. In the best practice, the staff follow the lead of the children in play and sustain conversation with the children building effectively on their interests. The close involvement of the staff as role models in imaginative and construction play encourages the children to persevere and to sustain concentration. On a number of occasions, the staff miss opportunities to promote the learning inherent in the activities and the resources. They are too formal in expectation, for example, asking the children to name parts of the body based on picture card recognition. There are missed opportunities to include such activities as an integral part of the play programme.
- The children with additional needs are well-supported. The staff provide an appropriate range of activities to develop their language based on strategies advised by external support staff. There is an inclusive ethos within the playgroup through which the children with additional needs are well-integrated in the activities. Parents are given regular feedback about their children's progress.
- While the organisation of the day provides lengthy periods of indoor play, outdoor physical play and a group story session, the learning from the snack and transitions for tidy-up are underdeveloped.

- The staff compile detailed long- and medium-term written planning for the six areas of learning. The key worker observations of the children's progress inform aspects of the planning which is starting to show progression in the activities. The staff and the early years specialist have appropriately identified the planning and assessment processes as an ongoing area of development.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to the care and welfare of the children does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes. The children related well to the expectations of the staff and enjoy a good range of interesting learning experiences; however, the learning potential inherent in the activities was not well enough promoted through play.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The rigour of self-evaluation and action planning leading to improvement by the staff is limited and as a result the provision for learning, and the review cycle for the playgroups policies, including the safeguarding policy is underdeveloped. The independent early years specialist provides very good advice and guidance for the staff to identify areas for improvement and has appropriately identified and promoted ongoing staff development to build capacity for strategic leadership.
- The management committee are committed to working more collaboratively with the staff and the early years specialist to promote reflective practice and more robust monitoring and evaluation of the pre-school programme, in order to raise the outcomes for the children. They reported that due to the distance they are required to travel, they have not yet been able to access appropriate management committee training.
- The staff have extended the provision for parental involvement through the Department of Education 'Big Bedtime Read' initiative and have acquired a well-resourced library of books that interest the children. There are missed opportunities to engage the parents as visitors to the playgroup to talk about their roles in the local community and to extend the children's awareness of their locality and community links. Appropriate links are being made within clusters and to a local SureStart to develop share information about how to support the children on transition to pre-school.

## **8. Safeguarding**

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance of the relevant departments. However the playgroup needs to:

- extend further the risk assessment process, in particular for visits; and
- continue to review and update the safeguarding policies in line with the guidance from the departments; and
- to clarify the staff understanding of their roles and responsibilities for reporting, and the procedure for recording, potential concerns about members of staff.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Ballinderry Playgroup needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all learners.

The areas for improvement are:

- to improve opportunities for the children to be creative across the curriculum;
- for the staff to sustain high quality shared interactions with the children;
- to develop further the snack routine and the arrangements for transitions for indoor and outdoor play to make more effective use of all the time for learning; and
- to ensure more rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation in order to inform the action planning and promote continuous improvement.

The ETI will monitor and report on the playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

### **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 a representative of the management committee;
- a meeting with the early years specialist; 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.

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