

# Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



## Ballycrochan Pre-school Playgroup, Bangor, County Down

Voluntary Playgroup DE Ref No: 4AB-0171

Report of an Inspection in October 2019



Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



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## 1. Context

Ballycrochan Playgroup operates within Ballycrochan Presbyterian Church, Bangor and provides extensive indoor and outdoor learning spaces. There have been a number of changes in leadership and staffing since the last inspection.

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending part-time	26
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	26
With statement of special educational needs	#
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0
With English as an additional language	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	92
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	90
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

A minority of the parents replied to the confidential questionnaire; they indicated very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the playgroup's educational and pastoral provision. In particular, the parents praised the fun and well-organised learning environment for the children, the care and approachability of the staff and the effective communication. All of the staff responded to the questionnaire; their responses and written comments commended the supportive team approach, the high morale within the setting and the opportunities for additional training. A summary of the questionnaire responses was shared with the secretary of the management committee, the setting's manager and the playgroup leader.

## 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>	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Very good
<b>Quality of provision</b>	Very good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Very good

#### 5. Outcomes for learners

- The children settle quickly and easily in their indoor and outdoor learning areas. They share their needs and interests with others, including adults, and ask for help confidently when they require it. Most of the children play with sustained interest in their self-chosen activities, working together and chatting happily for extended periods.
- The children's personal, social and emotional development is very well established for the time of year; their self-reliance and ability to follow quite complex routines, such as the snack and tidy time, is developing well their ability to sequence instructions and understand the daily timetable for the session. Almost all follow independently the helpful prompts and labels in the setting to help them access resources and see to their own needs as appropriate. The children respond positively to the staff's high expectations and consistent use of positive rewards and praise which encourages them to behave very well, take responsibility and show respect to others and the resources.
- The children engage productively and creatively in the stimulating activities provided indoors and outdoors. The progression and variety in the planned activities hold the children's interest and develop their wider skills. They listen attentively to stories, browse and enjoy books; including those which they take home regularly. The children beat out rhythms with percussion instruments and extend their knowledge of mathematical and positional language in the meaningful context of their music and singing activities. They are developing a very secure understanding of early mathematical concepts, including number, measures, shape and space, time and sequences and they are curious to investigate the natural world around them.
- All of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, are making very good continuous progress across almost all aspects of the pre-school curriculum.

#### 6. Quality of provision

- The staff provide a colourful and well-organised learning environment in the playroom, large hall play areas and outdoors; all of the available space is used effectively to extend the children's learning, including their physical development and energetic play.
- The staff are consistent in their interactions across all aspects of the provision. They encourage the children to ask questions and develop their vocabulary and make very good use of spontaneous opportunities to increase the children's learning.

- The detailed written planning contains progression across the learning areas throughout the year. The staff also take good account of the children's various needs and interests when planning the activities and resources. The staff know the children very well and collate systematically the information from their interactions with the children, along with their observations of the children's learning. The children's programme provides a very good balance of free play and time outdoors along with more structured activities.
- The staff's effective approaches to supporting children with additional needs ensure that all of the children are included fully in the various activities. Detailed records outline the strategies they use and their communication with the parents and outside agencies to bring about continuous progress in the children's learning and all-round development.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning and teaching, and the children's outcomes. The staff take time to listen to the children and develop continuously the learning environment to nurture their personal, social and emotional development.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The highly skilled leadership and management of the playgroup, together with the knowledgeable management committee, promote effective and collaborative teamwork to successfully bring about continuous improvement in the provision and the children's outcomes.
- The development plan contains appropriate strategic priorities. The systematic approach to self-evaluation and the staff's commitment to ongoing professional development impact positively on all areas of the playgroup's provision.
- The playgroup has established many helpful links with the parents, relevant agencies, local primary schools and the community, which directly benefit the children. For example, the staff invite parents with a variety of professions to enrich the children's learning about and first-hand experience of people who help us.

## **8. Safeguarding**

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the relevant Departments.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Ballycrochan Pre-school Playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

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:

- meetings with those involved with leadership and management, including the setting manager, the playroom leader and staff team and the secretary of the management committee; 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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