

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Ballygawley Early Years,
Ballygawley, County Tyrone

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in
May 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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1. Context

Ballygawley Early Years is located in a purpose built pre-school setting within a community centre on the outskirts of Ballygawley town. The setting has its own pre-school outdoor area. The leader is in post at the since the last inspection in June 2011.

Number of children:	Morning session	Afternoon session
Attending part-time	26	12
Funded by Department of Education	26	12
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#	#
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0	#
With English as an additional language	0	#
Number of children who transferred from a Sure Start 2 year old programme	5	#
Number of children who participated in other Sure Start services	7	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2	100%
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	93%
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

2. Views of parents and staff

A minority (26%) of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The parental responses were very positive about the children's learning experiences and included a small number of written comments that praised the good relationships, management and organisation by the staff. The staff responses were wholly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. All of the responses have been shared with the leadership and management.

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

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children's learning is good to outstanding across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. All of the children in the morning and afternoon sessions are well behaved, secure in their daily routines, enjoy concentrated productive play and are well-motivated to learn. The children's personal and social development is a key strength and they have high levels of independence and show respect and consideration for one another during collaborative play.
- The children have a very good knowledge of and interest in the world around them. The children grow and care for flowers in the outdoor area. During the inspection, the children observed the parts of a daffodil and investigated the different textures and colours. Through role play, the children can talk about people who help us and are able to engage purposefully as hospital or construction staff.
- The children sing songs and rhymes and listen intently to follow instructions in the action songs. The children observed, during play and at snack time, have well-developed turn-taking skills and engaged in conversations with the staff about their interests and family outings. The children's drawing and representational artwork on display is well-developed. The children's fine motor skills are appropriately developed for their stages of development.
- The children are making very good progress in using mathematical language to explain and show understanding of early mathematical concepts related to number, shape and measurement. Sorting and matching concepts are well-developed and applied when the children use their self-help skills to organise themselves at transitions. The children's use of songs and stories for mathematical learning is underdeveloped.
- The children with additional needs are making the expected progress, particularly in learning new vocabulary and understanding language. They are able to access all areas of play and use very good social skills in small and large groups to fully participate in all the activities.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff have created well-defined, spacious and interesting areas for indoor and outdoor play. While, the outdoor area is recently designed to promote learning across the curriculum, utilising the full potential of this area for the children's learning is an area for development which the staff and the early years specialist have identified and the inspection endorses. The staff are planning appropriately to improve the children's opportunities for energetic play and the associated potential development of the children's gross motor skills.

- The staff operate a key worker system, know the children very well and collate detailed anecdotal observations of the children which they use to inform the short-term planning. The evaluation of the children's learning is based on anecdotal observations of the children's responses to activities. The staff need to develop further the methods for assessment of the children's progress in learning and use the information to report more effectively on the children's outcomes across the six areas of learning.
- The organisation of the day provides for lengthy periods of play. The transitions and routines are smooth and unobtrusive. The snack routine effectively promoted the children's mathematical understanding about measures, and their sense of responsibility, self-help and social skills; hygiene arrangements and teeth brushing have established good habits for the children.
- The skilful interactions between the staff and the children are a key strength of the provision for learning. All of the staff are consistent in how they listen attentively to the children and model high quality language promotion strategies that are well-matched to the children's individual needs, to purposefully extend their language and thinking skills. The children have appropriate time to process information and to carry out instructions or answer questions and are confident to engage with the staff.
- The provision for children with additional needs enables the children to access all areas of play according to their stage of development. While the staff identify the children who have additional learning needs, the individual education plans need to include more detailed and relevant information about the specific nature of the children's difficulties and the strategies to help the children. There are inclusive strategies used for the children with behavioural needs which are having a positive impact on enabling the children to engage in productive collaborative play. The effective links with the Sure Start speech therapist assisted the staff with strategies to promote language development.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on their learning and development. The children have well-developed social skills; they are respectful and caring towards one another and are polite to visitors.

7. Leadership and management

- Overall, the leadership and management of the playgroup is good. The leader and the staff have enhanced their qualifications and apply new learning and research through their highly effective interaction with the children. They are a reflective and collegial team that have worked productively to develop a shared understanding and consistent approach to the development of the curriculum which would benefit from an alignment to the Pre-School Curricular Guidance for the six areas of learning in the pre-school curriculum. The staff are currently using a self-evaluation tool to support the continuous development and exploring different formats for action planning; however, the processes for self-evaluation do not take enough account of the assessment and evaluation of the children's progress in learning and the impact of the actions to promote improvement.

- The early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation, the committee and the staff work closely as a team and have brought about significant improvements in the outdoor learning environment and the development of the resources for the curriculum. While the staff and the early years specialist identify areas and set priorities for improvement, the advice and guidance from the EYS is not strategically informing the actions and targets to bring about specific improvements in the children's learning and the development of the staff. As a result of the inspection, the development plan and actions plans need to be adjusted to bring forward the action to promote improvement, in particular for the current cohort of children identified with special and additional needs
- The playgroup has established effective links with the parents, SureStart, relevant agencies and the main feeder primary schools for the benefit of the children. Information about the children's progress and development is recorded and is shared with the parents at key times throughout the year. The parents are kept informed about any additional needs the children may have and the newsletters include relevant educational focus on activities for the parents to help their children to learn.

8. Safeguarding

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

9. Overall effectiveness

Ballygawley Early Years demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all children.

The playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address the following area for improvement.

- The leadership and management, at all levels, need to develop further the processes for self-evaluation in order to monitor more rigorously, the impact of the actions, to promote improvement in the children's progress in learning across the curriculum.

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 a representative of 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:

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 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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