

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Ballyholme Presbyterian  
Church Pre-school, Bangor,  
County Down

Report of an Inspection in  
May 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.

Nineteen percent of parents and all of the staff responded to the online confidential questionnaire. Most of the parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the work of the pre-school. In particular, the parents expressed how happy and well-settled their children were in the playgroup and highlighted the commitment of the caring, welcoming staff and the engaging range of learning experiences provided for the children. The staff questionnaire responses were highly positive. All of the findings from the questionnaires were shared and discussed with the representative from the management group and the staff.

## 2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests 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

Ballyholme Presbyterian Church Pre-school operates in a Church Hall in the Ballyholme area of Bangor. The children come mostly from the surrounding area. There have been changes in staffing and in roles and responsibilities since the time of the last inspection and a new chairperson of the management committee was appointed in September 2015.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

## **5. Achievements and standards**

- For the time of year, a majority of the children settle quickly to periods of sustained play and stay engaged to complete their activities. Most of the children collaborate well and approach the adults and one another with ease; they demonstrate good levels of independence when selecting activities and manage their own resources well. Overall, the children display a positive attitude to learning and are making good levels of progress in most areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- Most of the children communicate their ideas and needs confidently using a widening range of vocabulary related to the activities and themes within the play. They enjoy browsing books and the story and action rhyme sessions with the adults; a majority show good listening and attention skills. The staff need to develop and apply more consistent strategies to help a minority of children to improve their listening skills, especially within larger group sessions. In addition, the children need more opportunities to develop their early mark-making and experimental writing.
- The children respond well to the frequent opportunities the staff provide to build their early mathematical understanding of concepts including number, shape and pattern. They enjoy exploring and investigating the various interesting natural and authentic materials in the playroom and their representational artwork is detailed and attractive.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The staff team work diligently to provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment which they have to assemble and remove every day throughout most of the year. They make good use of the daily routines to extend the children's independence.
- The staff's interactions, on the day of the inspection were consistently good and, on occasions, very good. The adults listen to and value the children's conversations, they respond effectively to their needs and interests and use questions well to promote and draw out the children's thinking.
- The clear and progressive planning demonstrates that the children have broad and balanced learning experiences across the six pre-school learning areas. The staff monitor and evaluate well the impact of the planning on the quality and extent of the children's learning and use this information constructively to make adjustments to meet all the children's needs.
- The staff know the children very well and record insightful observations to assess and record the children's progress, maintaining a consistent focus on the link between the children's learning and the effectiveness of the activities. The children who have additional needs are identified, supported and monitored appropriately by the staff and are making good progress in their all round development and learning.

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the pre-school is very good. The adults treat the children with kindness and respect and there are very positive working relationships at all levels. The staff prepare carefully and adapt interesting learning activities to stimulate the children's interest and imagination.
- The children are provided with a healthy snack and have enjoyable opportunities to cook and eat simple and nutritious recipes. The children use part of the indoor space for physical movement activities and develop a good range of physical skills outdoors.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leader sets a positive tone for and leads ably the continuous development of the pre-school. She is supported well in this by the dedicated, experienced staff team, who use their complementary skills effectively and collaboratively to bring about further improvement in the provision.
- The pre-school's processes for self-evaluation and development planning are developing well. The action plans outline clearly a number of relevant priorities for improvement. With the support of the management committee, the staff monitor and evaluate carefully the impact of the work on the children's learning experiences and the outcomes they achieve.
- The playgroup has built up a good range of links with the parents, the community and various external agencies to support and extend the staff's work with the children. The parents are welcomed into the playgroup and are informed about the progress their children are making and aspects of the provision. Most of the children transfer to the local primary school and appropriate transitional arrangements are in place from pre-school to year one.
- The early years specialist (EYS) from the Early Years Organisation provides effective support to help develop the provision. The staff are benefitting from the Early Years Special Educational Needs Capacity Building programme and further professional development and, appropriately, they are developing arrangements to sustain and embed this training within the pre-school programme.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

Ballyholme Presbyterian Church Pre-school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the pre-school sustains improvement, in particular, the need to:

- develop the children's attention and listening skills and increase the opportunities for early mark-making and experimental writing.

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON BALLYHOLME PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
PRE-SCHOOL, BANGOR**

**1. Details of children**

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending full-time	
Attending part-time	27
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	24
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	1
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	1
With English as an additional language	0
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0

\* 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.	100
Average attendance for the previous year.	93%
Number of days open in previous school year	187

**2. Duration of sessions**

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
	9.00-12.00	

**3. Details of staff**

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders		4
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

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	1
Trainees	0

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

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