

Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Banagher Community Playgroup, Feeny, County Londonderry

Voluntary pre-school playgroup DE Ref No: 2AB-0299

Report of an Inspection in November 2019



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1. Context

Banagher Community Playgroup is situated in a purpose-built centre in the Beechmount area of Feeny, County Londonderry. All of the children are in their pre-school year. The playgroup was last inspected in April 2014 and since then there has been a change in staff, leadership and management.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	22
Funded by Department of Education	22
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2 **	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	81%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

Source: data provided by the setting.

** 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

Nearly one-half of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The responses were positive about the life and work of the playgroup. A summary of the questionnaire responses was shared with the leadership and a representative from 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

Overall effectiveness	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Important areas for improvement
Quality of provision	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children's learning and development in early mathematics is an important area for improvement. While a small number of children were observed naming colours and engaging in incidental counting, the children's use of early mathematical language is not integrated naturally within their play or sufficiently developed for this time of year.
- During the inspection, the children listened attentively and enjoyed stories read by the adults and a small number of them enjoyed browsing in books in the book corner. The children's interest in and use of early mark making and representational drawing is underdeveloped.
- Although there is a range of real and authentic resources, the children's interest in exploring, investigating and experimenting within the World Around Us is limited. Children are developing good fine motor skills; however, aspects of their gross motor skills are not developed effectively through energetic physical play.
- All of the children are happy in the setting and engage confidently with the range of activities in the playroom; however a small number do not sustain purposeful play. The children are confident in approaching staff and visitors to show their play and discuss what they have made. Most of the children are independent in the snack routine but rely on adult support when labelling their work and putting on their coats for outdoor play.

6. Quality of provision

- There are important areas for improvement across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Although there is regular short-term planning in place, it does not identify clearly the learning and progression in the development of the children's skills. The staff do not have a sufficiently detailed understanding of the pre-school curriculum and how to use it effectively to plan for learning and also for assessing the children's progress.
- The staff interactions with the children are variable in quality. Although staff do build on the children's interests it is not consistent. Consequently, during the sessions observed, there were too many missed opportunities for the staff to model language and play for the children, encourage problem-solving and develop early mathematical language.
- The staff provide a bright, organised playroom and have started to develop the outdoor area to provide a wider range of experiences for the children. The planning for learning and progression across all areas of the pre-school curriculum in outdoor play is not sufficiently detailed to guide the staff in their interactions with the children.
- 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 the children's learning, teaching and outcomes. The staff praise the children and promote positive behaviour; however, the overall quality of the provision is not enabling the children to achieve the expected outcomes in a number of areas of the pre-school curriculum.

7. Leadership and management

- There are important areas for improvement in leadership and management. While there is a development plan and a few well-structured associated action plans in place, the processes of self-evaluation and action planning leading to improvement are under-developed. The staff have identified some appropriate areas requiring improvement within the setting and recognise the need to develop a shared understanding of the Pre-School Curriculum with support from their early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation.
- The staff are beginning to work as a team and are well-supported by the management trustees.
- There are effective links with the parents who are kept informed of the life and work of the playgroup through the newsletter and the Department of Education 'Getting Ready to Learn' initiative. The staff have good links with the local primary schools to ensure a smooth transition for the children into year 1 in primary school. There are some links with the local Sure Start to support children transitioning into the playgroup; however these could be developed further to support parents with additional services.

8. Safeguarding

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

However, Banagher Community Playgroup needs to:

- review a small number of policies to reflect more fully the current practice; and
- update the flowcharts for Child Protection and Complaints procedures.

9. Overall effectiveness

Banagher Community Playgroup 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 areas for improvement are to develop:

- staff understanding and knowledge of the pre-school curriculum;
- and promote progression in learning through high quality adult interaction;
- the children's problem solving, investigation, creativity and promote purposeful play; and
- the staff understanding and use of self-evaluation to bring about improvement in the outcomes for children and the provision for learning.

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 18 to 24 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 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 management¹:

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

¹ 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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