

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Carrick Pre-School,
Warrenpoint, County Down

Report of an Inspection in
March 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing Inspection Services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
Department for Communities

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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 a confidential questionnaire.

Fifty percent of parents and all of the staff responded to the online confidential questionnaire. All of the parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the work of the pre-school. In particular, the parents expressed how happy their children were in the pre-school setting and highlighted the professional, welcoming staff and the range of nature walks and visitors the children enjoy as part of their learning experiences. The staff questionnaire responses were wholly positive. All of the findings from the questionnaires were shared and discussed with the representatives 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

Carrick Pre-School is situated in a purpose-built unit located adjacent to the Burren Heritage Centre, Warrenpoint. The majority of the children come from the local area. Both the leader and deputy leader were in post at the time of the last inspection in 2007.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Outstanding
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- All of the children engage in sustained, purposeful play. They display high levels of independence, are familiar with the daily routines and through the HighScope methodology, assume responsibility for accessing their play resources.
- The children listen to and engage with stories and rhymes and a small number of the children are able to recall the sequence of events in very good detail through role play. The children's fine motor skills are very good and their mark-making and representational drawings are well developed and celebrated in the displays in the playroom.
- The children's understanding of early mathematical concepts is outstanding. They use mathematical language naturally and with confidence across all areas of learning, both in the playroom and in the outdoor area.

6. Provision for learning

- The staff interactions with the children are of a very high quality. Through effective questioning, they encourage the children to problem-solve, extend their vocabulary and, where necessary, scaffold and model language for them. The opportunities for incidental and child-led learning are exploited fully by the staff.
- The staff provide an effective pre-school programme based on the HighScope methodology. They operate a key-worker system and have compiled detailed records of the children's learning and use the information gathered from ongoing observations to plan a programme based on the interests and needs of all the children.
- The quality of the provision for children who require additional support with aspects of their learning is very good. The children's learning needs are identified early, effective partnerships have been developed with the parents and outside agencies, and appropriate intervention strategies are in place to support the children.
- The quality of the pastoral care in the pre-school is outstanding. There is a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the pre-school and the working relationships between the staff and the children are very good. The staff are consistent in their use of positive behaviour strategies and praise; the children respond very well to these approaches, resulting in a calm, nurturing and supportive learning environment.
- The staff give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, the healthy break and the good opportunities for energetic physical activity, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff and the newly formed committee display a collaborative team approach and are dedicated to the further development of the pre-school. They are currently working on the first year of implementation of the three-year development plan which is designed appropriately to meet the needs of the children. The regular evaluations of the provision include the responses of the children, the staff and the parents and they are used to inform future plans and extend the children's learning.

- The parents are kept informed of the work and life of the pre-school through, for example, the monthly newsletter and they are encouraged to participate in the regular fundraising events. There are very good links with the neighbouring primary school and the local community and the children benefit from regular visits to the pre-school from, for example a vet, a farmer and a postman which enhance greatly the provision.
- The early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation was allocated recently to this playgroup and is beginning to provide support for the staff in developing further their understanding of the HighScope programme and the use of self-evaluation.
- The pre-school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Overall effectiveness

Carrick Pre-school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the pre-school sustains improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON CARRICK PRE SCHOOL, WARRENPOINT

1. Details of children

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

* 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.	24
Average attendance for the previous year.	88%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
-	9.00-12.00	-

3. Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
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	-	0

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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