

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Causeway Pre-School,  
Portrush, County Antrim

Report of an Inspection in  
June 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 playgroup:

The 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.
The playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.
The 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 playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The 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 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.

All of the staff responded to the confidential, online questionnaire. Overall, the responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision. Thirty-six percent of the parents responded to the questionnaire and all were highly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup.

## 2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest 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

Causeway Pre-school is situated purpose-built accommodation in the grounds of St Patrick's Church. The pre-school opened three years ago and began offering funded places for pre-school education. A baseline inspection visit was conducted in 2014.

## 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**

- The children are respectful and caring to one another. They sustain purposeful, settled and creative play for lengthy periods of time. Almost all of the children make independent choices and are confident to seek additional resources or adult support to develop their ideas. They are beginning to form friendships and most are engaging in productive collaborative play.
- The children are developing appropriate speech and language and very good observational and mark-making skills. While a majority of the children of the children experience a challenging language experience the more able children are not sufficiently challenged in developing their repertoire of rhymes and songs.
- The children have an awareness of early mathematical concepts related to sorting, matching and counting. During the construction and imaginative play, the children understand and use the mathematical language of simple concepts about volume, space and shape.
- The 'World Around Us' area of learning enables effectively the children to talk about their pending transition to year one in primary school. The children are interested in the school uniforms and photographs in the role-play area and are aware of moving on to a new school. The children care for the plants in the outdoor garden and have an awareness of people who help in the local community.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The staff plan effectively as a team and have developed a range of themes with the associated resources to add variety, interest and progression in programme across the year. The 'key worker' system, where each member of staff assesses the children's learning and the associated link to the planned programme is under-developed. The school has appropriately identified this aspect as an area for development. The staff are responsive to the needs of the children, add additional resources and adjust the planning to build appropriately on the children's interests.
- The staff and committee, with the financial support of the parish, have equipped the pre-school with a range of good quality resources. The attractive learning environment with authentic resources enriches the children's broad and balanced learning experiences and develops effective levels of exploration and investigation. The addition of a stimulating outdoor play area extends the children's physical development and scientific awareness of growing and caring for plants. The organisation of the day provides for lengthy periods of play; however, the snack routine does not make best use of the available time for learning.
- The staff's interaction with the children is sensitive and supports effectively their exploration of the range of play activities. The children model good language from the adults, enjoy adult-child stories during play and benefit from effective interventions which promote their learning. The staff use open-ended questions which extend effectively the children's thinking and language development. The group story session has potential for development in order to promote the use of higher order literacy skills to develop further the children's memory, recall and prediction skills.

- The staff have established effective links with the parents and know and understand the children's individual needs. One-to-one support is carefully planned when required. The children with additional needs learn well within an inclusive environment.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The quality of the relationships at all levels is excellent. The staff know the children well and respond with care to their needs and interests. The provision of stimulating activities and resources engages and motivates the children to enjoy learning.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity; the children enjoy healthy foods and participate in a varied range of energetic physical activities throughout the session.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- Monthly monitoring meetings by the committee identify appropriate areas for improvement and an effective team develops the provision and promotes improvement. The challenge of limited funding and the tenacity of the team to engage community support in significant developments over a short period of time has improved the quality of the provision.
- Action planning is at an early stage of development and the staff are reviewing and developing their self-evaluation processes. The very good advice, guidance and support provided by the early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation informs effectively the development of action planning for improvement.
- The staff have developed effective links with the parents through, for example, regular informative newsletters and information sessions. There is an effective programme to support the parents and the children in transition to primary school.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding. The arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The chairperson and designated committee member for safeguarding need to complete the relevant training as part of their induction programme.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

Causeway pre-school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The main areas for improvement are to develop further the language provision and the planning and assessment methods.

The ETI will continue to monitor how the pre-school sustains improvement.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON CAUSEWAY PRE-SCHOOL, PORTRUSH.

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	11
Attending part-time	12
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	11
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	*
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0
With English as an additional language	*
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0

On 1 July 2015.

\*\* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

\* fewer than 5

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	11
Average attendance for the previous year.	91%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	3 hours	

3. Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders		3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		0
New appointments within the previous 12 months		2

Number of: ***	
Students	*
Trainees	0

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

\* fewer than 5

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