

# Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



## Chirpy Chicks Pre-school Playgroup, Greyabbey, County Down

Private Day Nursery DE Ref No: 4AB-0283

Report of an Inspection in October 2019



Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



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## 1. Context

Chirpy Chicks Pre-school Playgroup operates in the village hall in Greyabbey. The children who attend come from the surrounding area and the wider Ards Peninsula. There have been a number of changes in leadership and staffing since the last inspection.

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>
Attending part-time	19
Under 3 years of age*	8
Funded by Department of Education	19
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**	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	93.7
Number of days open in previous school year	189

**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

N/A not available

## 2. Views of parents and staff

A minority of the parents replied to the confidential questionnaire; they indicated their satisfaction with almost all aspects of the playgroup's provision. In particular, the parents highlighted the good progress the children were making and the support for children who require additional assistance. Half of the staff responded to the questionnaire; their responses were also positive with the written comments outlining the team's supportive working relationship which focuses on meeting the children's needs. A summary of the questionnaire responses was shared with the staff team and the directors

## 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	Important areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Quality of provision	Important area for improvement
Leadership and management	Important area for improvement

#### 5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are settled and happy. Their oral language and listening skills are developing well. Almost all of the children sustain interest in their self-chosen activities, collaborating and chatting sociably with their friends for extended periods.
- The children's personal, social and emotional development is a strength; their independence and confidence in the playroom is well-established for the time of year. They respond positively to the staff's expectations and are developing familiarity with the daily routines and share thoughtfully the resources they need. They are friendly and well-behaved, approaching one another and adults with confidence to share their ideas and to ask for help.
- The children's understanding and use of early mathematical concepts and language and their interest in investigating the World Around Us are underdeveloped. The children enjoy stories and rhymes and most of them listen and engage with high levels of interest for extended periods and share and browse story books with others. They join in enthusiastically in role plays and ask and answer questions in relation to their play.
- All of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, are making good progress in most aspects of the pre-school curriculum.

#### 6. Quality of provision

- The staff interactions are not sufficiently focused on the learning to be developed. Consequently, there are missed opportunities to promote learning and use open-ended questioning and modelling of language to introduce new concepts and vocabulary at the point of learning. In particular, the staff do not make enough use of mathematical language relating to measurement, shape and space and positional language in meaningful contexts to extend the children's early mathematical understanding. The staff engage with the children at their level and model well positive working relationships.
- The long-term planning is not sufficiently detailed and is not reflective of the pre-school curricular guidance or appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children. The short-term planning does not identify explicitly enough the learning potential and the adult role within the activities, in order to ensure consistent progression in the children's learning. The staff's written observations and assessments, while often relevant, are not used sufficiently enough to inform meaningfully the future planning.

- The playroom is bright and well-resourced and good use is made of the available space. The staff respond well to the children's interests and introduce additional resources to enhance the children's learning experiences and foster their self-reliance. The organisation of the day provides good opportunities for free play and the playroom is well-organised to enable the children to make independent choices and access the resources they need.
- The children who require additional support are identified appropriately, included and supported fully in the various activities.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on the children's learning and well-being. The effective reward system encourages the children to make good choices and show respect to others and for their play resources.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The development planning processes and the staff use and understanding of self-evaluation are underdeveloped. The most recent development plan is not supported by associated action plans to guide sufficiently the improvement work and enable the leadership and staff to monitor and evaluate the impact of the improvement actions on the quality of the provision and the children's outcomes. The recent improvement work within the setting has focused on developing the quality of the learning environment and resources. The leadership articulates a vision for high-quality child-centred learning; the staff team is committed to supporting the improvement work to benefit the children.
- The playgroup employs an independent early years specialist, however, the work with the specialist has not focused sufficiently on identifying key priorities for improvement and providing appropriate support for the leadership in addressing them.
- The playgroup has established a range of beneficial links with the parents, relevant agencies and local primary schools.

## **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, the playgroup needs to:
  - update several policies to reflect more accurately the practice within the setting;
  - update the procedures for recording safeguarding allegations against a member of staff; and
  - ensure that the risk assessments for trips are specific to each individual trip.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Chirpy Chicks Pre-school Playgroup needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement include the need:

- to develop the planning for the curriculum to ensure that it is developmentally appropriate and that the staff exploit more fully the learning potential of the activities to extend the children's learning; and
- improve the staff's understanding and use of self-evaluation to inform the development planning process and bring about further improvement in the quality of the provision and the children's outcomes.

The ETI will monitor and report on the pre-school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12-18 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:

- meetings with those involved with leadership and management, including the directors, the playroom leader and staff team and the independent early years specialist; 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<sup>1</sup>:

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

<sup>1</sup> 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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