

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Clogher Valley Playgroup,
Clogher, Co Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
March 2015

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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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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's publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors observed teaching and learning 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 discussion with the staff;
- a meeting with those involved with leadership and management; and
- the opportunity for the parents, staff and members of the management group to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Thirty-three percent of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaires; their responses were highly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup.

2. Context

Clogher Valley Playgroup operates in a purpose-built mobile building on the outskirts of the village of Clogher. The children come from the village and the surrounding area. A new leader and deputy-leader were appointed shortly before the inspection.

3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards;
- the quality of provision; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall findings

Overall Performance Level	Very good
Achievements and Standards	Very good
Provision	Very good
Leadership and Management	Very good

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children arrive happily and settle quickly and easily into the play activities provided by the staff. All of the children behave very well and respond positively to the adults' high expectations, sharing freely their ideas and feelings. They display very good levels of confidence in their free play, for example, in the craft, imaginative play and outdoor areas.
- Almost all of the children make independent choices and access and use appropriately a good variety of games, resources and equipment to develop their understanding of sequences, create music, notice patterns, construct three-dimensional objects and explore aspects of the world around them. The children express imaginatively their creative ideas using a wide range of materials and show curiosity and enjoyment in investigating how to care for themselves and other living things including seeds, flowering plants and fish.
- The children's communication skills and use of language are progressing well. They enjoy books, rhymes and refrains and listen with high levels of interest during story sessions. Most of the children engage in conversations with other children during play and at the snack table. The children's early mark making and writing are developing appropriately with a minority beginning to write their own names and label their drawings.
- The children are making very good progress across all aspects of the pre-school curriculum and there is clear evidence of progression in their learning.

6. Provision

- All of the available space for learning is used effectively to encourage the children's independence and their free movement and play. The staff have created a stimulating and child-centred learning environment in the playroom which reflects well the children's interests and celebrates their various achievements. Appropriately, the staff are developing further the outdoor play.
- The staff interactions with the children are consistently of a high quality. The adults ask interesting, open-ended questions to extend the children's reasoning, listen closely to their stories and suggestions and use appropriately the associated vocabulary to extend the children's language and early mathematical understanding. Throughout the session, the staff work hard to achieve the full learning potential in the planned activities and to exploit any incidental opportunities to extend further the children's learning.
- Overall, the children's educational programme is well-balanced and contains creative opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff take careful account of the children's individual needs and stages of development in planning the programme which engages the children's curiosity and provides purposeful opportunities for them to investigate and try out their ideas.

- The detailed system for observing, assessing and recording the children's progress and development links effectively with the future planning and highlights what further actions the adults need to take in order to best meet the needs of all of the children and ensure their progression across the year.
- The staff are proactive in responding to children's individual needs as they become apparent, using all the information they gather to inform well the individual education plans and ensure that the children who require additional support make the best possible progress in learning. As the staff implement the various strategies to support individual children, they evaluate carefully the impact of the interventions on the children's progress and share this information systematically with the parents.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. There are very positive and effective working relationships at all levels and an inclusive and nurturing ethos where every child is cherished. The adults engage enthusiastically with the children in their free play activities.
- The children learn how to make healthy food choices, enjoy healthy snacks and participate in a varied range of energetic physical activities.

7. Leadership and management

- The complementary skills of the leader and deputy-leader set a very positive and purposeful tone for the work of the playgroup. They articulate clearly their vision and plans for bringing about continuous improvement in the provision and collaborate effectively with the rest of the skilful and experienced staff team in developing further all aspects of the children's learning.
- The staff operate effective, systematic processes to evaluate the provision that inform an appropriate range of improvement actions. Together with the management committee, they are suitably reflective in taking account of the impact of the improvement work on the overall quality of the provision.
- The playgroup is a highly-valued resource in the local community and the proactive, dedicated support given by the management committee and the parents contributes significantly to the life and work of the playgroup. The staff have developed effective working links with the parents and the local community; the parents are welcomed into the playgroup and are given comprehensive information about the provision and how to support their children's learning.
- The early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation provides effective, tailored support to develop the provision.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is very good and the pastoral care is outstanding. The playgroup is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION CLOGHER VALLEY PLAYGROUP

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	23	
in their immediate pre-school year	23	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	23	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	23	
with a statement of special educational needs	0	
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	*	
with English as an additional language	0	
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

Attendance** of funded children for the previous school year.	92%
Number of days open in previous school year	

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session
3 hours	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	4	
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	4	
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	
New appointments within previous 12 months	2	

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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