

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Crossgar Pre-School and Playgroup, Crossgar, County Down

Voluntary playgroup DE Ref No: 4BB-0185

Report of an Inspection in November 2019

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1. Context

Crossgar Pre-School and Playgroup is located in purpose built premises in the grounds of Glasswater Primary school in the village of Crossgar. Almost all of the children come from the village and surrounding area. There have been a changes in leadership and staffing since the last inspection. At the time of the inspection, the post of deputy leader was vacant. The playgroup engages in a shared education partnership with another local playgroup through the 'Sharing from the Start'.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	21
Funded by Department of Education	21
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	N/A
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	N/A
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

There were no questionnaire responses received from the parents or the staff.

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 areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are achieving a good standard in a majority of the areas within the pre-school curriculum. They settle quickly and engage purposefully in their chosen area of play. The children's self-management skills are very good for the time of year. They manage their snack routine, transition confidently between the play activities and tidy up their toys at the conclusion of the session. A minority of the children persevere and problem solve during the activities, for example, when chopping vegetables and building jigsaws.

- The children's descriptive language and understanding are developing well. They engage in a good variety of mark-making opportunities in the home corner, construction and creative areas; their representational drawings are of a good quality. Most of the children show an interest in books during play and at story time. They listen attentively while the story is being read and enjoy reciting rhymes and singing songs. The children's music making skills are less well-developed.
- Most of the children understand and use simple mathematical language associated with number, shape, colour and comparison of size as a natural part of their play and daily routines. However, the children's curiosity of and interest in the world around them and their physical skills are underdeveloped.

6. Quality of provision

- Planning at all levels is underdeveloped. As a result there is a lack of progression in learning within the planned programme; particularly in the world around us and the children's physical development. The staff provide insufficient opportunities for the children to explore, experiment and investigate the natural world around them. Observations of the children's learning are inconsistent and are not used effectively to inform the next stages in the children's learning.
- While the staff have begun to develop an attractive outdoor area, it is not resourced adequately to support the development of children's physical skills. There is no planning in place for outdoor play.
- The playroom is bright, attractive and well-organised with a very good range of authentic and natural resources incorporated into many areas of play.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is consistently good. All of the staff engage positively with the children. They observe and actively listen to the children's responses; allowing time for the children to develop their play. In the most effective interactions, the staff model language effectively and ask open-ended questions to extend the children's thinking skills.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's care and welfare impact positively on the outcomes. The consistent and constructive approach to behaviour management by the staff has led to a safe and secure environment where the children engage confidently and respectfully with adults and each other.

7. Leadership and management

- There are important areas for improvement within leadership and management. The processes for development planning and self-evaluation are underdeveloped. While the development plan outlines appropriate priorities, targets within the supporting action plans are too generic and do not focus sufficiently on the improving the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the children. Previous evaluations of action plans lack rigour and do not evidence clearly the impact of improvement work undertaken.

- Currently, the parents do not have sufficient opportunities to receive information on their child's progress. The staff have identified appropriately the need to strengthen links and communicate better with the parents. Recently, the staff have introduced an online application to redress this and provide more regular information and photographs to the parents on the life and work of the playgroup.
- The recently appointed management committee do not yet have a sufficient understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have identified appropriately the need for training and development in order to carry out their support and challenge function. Members of the committee have a very good range of expertise and skills and are supportive of the staff. A recently appointed early years' specialist from the Early Years' Organisation provides good support to the pre-school and, through working constructively with the staff, has identified appropriate areas for development.

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, Crossgar Pre-School and Playgroup needs to:

- update and ratify key policies to ensure they reflect the practice of the pre-school.

9. Overall effectiveness

Crossgar Pre-School and Playgroup needs to address important areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are to:

- develop the planning and assessment methods to provide appropriate progression in learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum and particularly the World Around Us, energetic play and outdoor play provision;
- establish an effective development planning process, underpinned by robust self-evaluation, and improve the overall quality of the provision and the outcomes for learner; and
- improve further the communication and links with parents.

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 12 to 18 months.

Health and safety

During inspection, the following Health and Safety matters were observed:

- there are a number of items on the access route which leads to the outdoor area and within the enclosed outdoor area which present a health and safety risk to the children

The pre-school needs to take mitigating action.

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 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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