

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Crow's Nest Community Playgroup,
Aghadowey, County Londonderry

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in
November 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
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1. Context

Crow's Nest Community Playgroup is operates within modular accommodation situated in the grounds of Culcrow Primary School. The children attending the playgroup come from the immediate and wider surrounding areas and the enrolment has remained steady in recent years. The management of the playgroup has recently submitted a planning proposal for a new modular build to be built on a site adjoining the current location.

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

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	5%
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	90%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

Source: data provided by the setting.

fewer than 5

2. Views of parents and staff

Twenty percent of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses showed very high levels of satisfaction with the play group, and written comments reflected how well the children enjoy and are progressing in their learning and how the staff team work effectively together in a highly caring and supportive way. The questionnaire responses were shared with the leader and representatives from the management committee.

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	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
Quality of provision	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

5. Outcomes for learners

- All of the children settle very well and engage eagerly with a wide range of materials and activities. They are inquisitive, creative and resilient and play for extended periods with high levels of enjoyment. Almost all of the children are making very good progress in their learning for the time of year.
- The children talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their play experiences and regularly ask the staff pertinent questions to clarify and extend their understanding. They listen attentively to stories and show a keen interest in books. The children refer to, and show very good understanding of mathematical language during play and social activities, including measures, space and number.
- The children who require support with aspects of their learning contribute confidently to all activities and communicate their thoughts and ideas assuredly. They are all making very good progress in their learning.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff present a very high quality, child-centred learning environment. The indoor area is richly resourced with a wide range of materials acquired by the staff based on their current research of best practice. Highly creative and purposeful use is made of materials, including for example, recycling the fruit peelings for use in creative art activities.
- The children have access to high quality outdoor learning areas, and excellent learning opportunities are planned to develop skills across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. They enjoy investigating and exploring their natural environment, experimenting with outdoor art and music resources, and they engage enthusiastically in developing advanced physical skills including their core strength.
- The consistently high quality of staff interactions with the children is a key strength of the provision. High quality open-ended questioning, modelling of activity-based language and well-timed prompts are embedded expertly in all areas of play and social activities throughout the day.
- The work of the staff is guided very effectively by their written planning; their attention to, and knowledge of the learning to be promoted through play is evident in both planning and practice. Well prioritised observations inform all future planning, ensuring progression in learning for all of the children.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are very well supported in a highly inclusive environment. Parents and relevant professionals are key partners throughout the well-considered process of identification of need, and effective individualised programmes are monitored closely to enable progress.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to the care and welfare of the children impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. The children are valued and praised by the staff who have created a very caring environment and as a result they are happy and confident.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the playgroup promotes a collegial and highly child-centred approach to providing quality care and education for all the children. A very positive and nurturing ethos pervades all aspects of the centre's provision.
- The management group is extremely conscientious and dedicated in carrying out its responsibilities and has provided consistency in their support and challenge function over a number of years.
- An independent early years specialist provides high quality guidance and support to the staff and the management committee; quality training linked to the centre's identified priorities, is delivered in a timely manner.
- The playgroup's approach to development planning and self-evaluation is very reflective and based on a well-embedded culture of continuous improvement in the best interests of the children. The leadership and staff continuously enhance their qualifications and the children benefit from highly reflective practice, based soundly on research and best practice.
- There are excellent links with the main feeder primary school, where there are thorough procedures in place to ensure a smooth transition for children into Year1. In addition, there is an established culture of sharing knowledge and expertise in early years education with the primary school staff, including joint staff development and training. The children benefit from very strong and purposeful links with parents and the local and wider community.

8. Safeguarding

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the relevant Departments.

9. Overall effectiveness

The Crow's Nest Community Playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the children.

The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

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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