

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Daisy Chain Day Care,
Crossmaglen, County Down

Private day care facility

Report of an inspection in
November 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



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 school:

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, 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.

A small number of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses were highly positive; in particular the parents praised the dedication of the staff and the children's enjoyment of the playgroup.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children¹, 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

Daisy Chain Day Care is a privately operated childcare facility situated in the village of Culloville, Crossmaglen. The day nursery operates a pre-school playgroup within the premises with access to an outdoor area; at the time of inspection 14 children were attending the setting. This is the first inspection of the setting since they entered the Pre-School Expansion Programme.

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

¹ In the case of a Day Nursery this refers only to the DE-funded pre-school provision.

5. Achievements and standards

- All the children are well settled, happy and enjoy their time in the playgroup. They respond positively to the daily routine and display good levels of independence; they self register on arrival, access the resources required for learning and snack, and assist in tidying the playroom. While a small number of the children play collaboratively, most enjoy solitary and parallel play.
- Overall the achievement and standards of the children are good. The children are able to engage in oral counting, pair and sort objects and are developing well their early mathematical language. They use a good range of vocabulary to communicate with each other and the adults. All of children respond well to the song and story time and make good use of the books in the playroom and outdoor areas. Representational drawings and early mark-making are under-developed. The children display a keen interest in their environment and enjoy the opportunity for exploration and investigation at the bug hotel and mud kitchen.

6. Provision for learning

- Whilst the indoor learning environment is stimulating and inviting, the wide range of resources presented to the children does not support progression in their learning. The children's own creations are valued and celebrated in displays within the playroom. The outdoor area has been recently developed and provides very good opportunities for the children to extend an understanding of their environment and enhance their physical skills.
- The quality of interactions between the staff and children is good or very good. The adults model a good use of language and use open-ended questions to extend the children's thinking. Opportunities for early mark-making are too limited. The staff engage purposefully with individual and small groups of children at play, but do not always monitor their interests and needs.
- The children's educational programme is well-balanced with good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The planning guides well the work of the staff; they operate a key-worker system and have compiled informative records of the children's learning. The staff have a limited understanding of the Code of Practice for Special Needs and the monitoring of those children who are experiencing difficulty with aspects of their learning is under-developed.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. A welcoming, caring ethos influences the work of the playgroup and working relationships between the staff and the children are very good.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff work well as a team and have made a useful start on the process of self evaluation and development planning. Their understanding of special needs and how to plan for the individual needs and interests of the children requires further development. The management committee provides opportunities for the staff to plan and review their practice.

- The early years specialist provides good support to the staff and has facilitated their professional development in aspects of the pre school curriculum, particularly in the World Around Us.
- The playgroup has effective links with parents, through for example the monthly newsletter, which provides information about the monthly theme and how they can support their child's learning at home.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children which broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. Clear risk assessments are required to be completed for all outings undertaken by the playgroup.

8. Overall effectiveness

Daisy Chain Day Care demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.

There are areas for improvement that the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The areas for improvement are:

- to develop a progressive programme for the development of the children's early mark making,
- for staff to develop a clear understanding of the Code of Practice for Special Needs in order to ensure the needs of all children are met, and
- for the leadership and management, with the continued support of their early years specialist, to extend and develop the self-evaluation and development planning processes to bring about further improvements to the provision.

The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON DAISY CHAIN DAY CARE

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	14
Attending part-time	7
Funded by Department of Education	14
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#

* On 1 July.

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

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average attendance for the previous year.	90%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time
3 hours

3. Details of staff

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

*** Total placements since September of current year

Source: data provided by the nursery school / playgroup.

fewer than 5

N/A not available

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