

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Early Learners Day Nursery,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection in
April 2015

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 centres, 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 staff holding specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a discussion with the proprietor and key staff members;
- a meeting with a small number of parents; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

The parental responses to the questionnaire indicate very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the educational and pastoral provision provided by the nursery. In particular, the parents appreciate the caring and child-centred approach of the staff, the wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences provided for the children, the effective links established with the parents and the commitment of the staff to the care and well-being of the children. The staff responses indicate very good teamwork and a professional approach to their work with the children.

2. Context

Early Learners Day Nursery is located on Windsor Avenue in South Belfast. The children attending the nursery come mainly from a local catchment area. A small number of the children enrolled have been identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning and development.

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	Outstanding
Achievements and Standards	Outstanding
Provision	Outstanding
Leadership and Management	Outstanding

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children have developed very positive attitudes and dispositions for learning. They are confident in choosing activities and resources, display high levels of independence and show respect for their peers, the staff and their environment. Almost all of the children engage in purposeful and sustained play throughout the session and persevere with tasks.
- The children enjoy thoroughly the stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments and spend lengthy periods exploring and investigating the very well presented activities, resources and play areas. The children engage readily with the staff and can talk confidently about their play and experiences and ask questions to seek clarification. They enjoy stories and participate well in a wide range of songs and rhymes. During a group story session the children demonstrated good recall from a previous story and were able to make connections with particular events.
- The children use independently, the wide range of creative materials to make detailed representations of the world as they see it. They are confident to experiment and develop their own ideas which are celebrated by the staff and displayed attractively throughout the pre-school.
- The children are developing very well their fine and gross motor skills through the excellent variety of experiences provided both indoors and outdoors.

6. Provision

- The learning environment is richly resourced to provide an excellent range of materials and experiences which meet very well the needs of the children. The rooms are very attractively presented and enhanced by interest areas, relevant photographs and displays of the children's own work many of which incorporate written captions of their comments. The easy access the children have to materials promotes their independence very well. The outdoor area is thoughtfully planned to ensure a wide range of learning across the curriculum with particularly good opportunities for children to explore, learn about and care for the world around them.
- The staff have a very good shared understanding of the learning to be promoted through the play and the daily routines. They are highly skilled in supporting the children to progress in their learning and development, listen carefully to the children, model language and use appropriate questioning to extend their thinking. They provide high quality support for the children identified with additional learning needs.
- The written planning guides the staff very well in their work with the children and it informs an extensive range of experiences for the children which progress appropriately through the year. The staff know the children very well and use the information gained through their interactions with, and observations of the children, to inform future learning and to meet their individual needs. Appropriate procedures are in place to inform the parents about their child's progress and development. The wide range of external visits and visitors to the pre-school enhances further the children's learning experiences.

- The outstanding pastoral care is exemplified in the welcoming and very respectful ethos in which each child and their family is valued and supported.

7. Leadership and management

- The very effective leadership and management of the pre-school promotes excellent teamwork and a shared vision for providing high quality care and education. The staff are highly reflective in their work and promote a culture of continuous improvement. The independent early years specialist (EYS) provides high quality advice, support and guidance for the pre-school.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the pre-school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Conclusion

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

STATISTICAL INFORMATION EARLY YEARS DAY NURSERY, BELFAST

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	28	
in their immediate pre-school year	28	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	28	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	28	
with a statement of special educational needs	0	
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	
with English as an additional language	9	
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.	99%
Number of days open in previous school year	192

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session
2½ hours	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	4	2
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	4	1
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	1	0

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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