

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Forever Friends Cross-
Community Playgroup,
Coalisland, County Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
January 2016

eti

*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 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 nursery school / playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school / playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school /playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school/ playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school/ 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 nursery school's/ playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The nursery school / 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 nursery school's / 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 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 including the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Seventeen percent of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaire and were highly positive. In their additional written comments, the parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the playgroup. The staff questionnaire responses were wholly positive.

2. Focus of inspection

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

Forever Friends Cross-Community Playgroup is situated in the Gortgonis Citizen's Centre in Coalisland, County Tyrone. Currently, 24 pre-school education programme funded children attend the part-time session in the playgroup. The staff use the HighScope approach to pre-school education.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are well settled for the time of year and are secure in the routines of the day. All of the children engage in purposeful, concentrated play of both a solitary and collaborative nature. They are developing well their independence, effective social skills and positive attitudes to their learning.
- The children communicate effectively with each other and with adults during the well-established greeting, planning and review sessions. They take part in sustained role play and participate enthusiastically in the large group story time. The children enjoy books, access them independently and make very good use of the opportunities for early mark- making.
- The children are developing well their fine motor skills as they use a range of tools in the playroom during snack, at the dough table and in the home corner. They are developing appropriately their gross motor skills as they engage enthusiastically in physical energetic play outdoors.
- The children have a very good understanding of key mathematical concepts, such as number, measures and positional language; they use mathematical language appropriately during play, both indoors and outdoors.

6. Provision for learning

- The staff have created an attractive, child-centred and well-organised learning environment indoors and are continuing to develop appropriately the outdoor provision. The layout of the playroom is used effectively to encourage the children's independence, decision making and self-management skills.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is consistently of a high quality. The staff model play and use effective open-ended questions to develop the children's thinking and problem solving skills. A particular strength of the provision is the modelling of mathematical language by the staff.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The staff have a respectful and caring approach to the children; they listen to them, build effectively on their ideas and offer choices throughout a well-organised daily routine. The children are happy and secure with the staff who implement consistently and skilfully the positive behaviour management strategies.
- The play programme is broad and well-balanced and provides very good learning experiences across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Currently, the staff are piloting a new High Scope method of observing, recording and reporting on the children's progress. They have identified appropriately the need to ensure that the observations inform consistently future planning.
- The staff have identified a small number of the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning; they liaise effectively with the outside support agencies who provide additional guidance and support in planning to meet the children's needs.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity; 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

- There is a collaborative approach to leadership and management. All of the staff are committed to their work and have a shared vision for providing high quality care and education for all of the children. The leader is a very effective role model and is supported well by her skilful staff in all areas of the life and work of the playgroup. The staff are reflective practitioners and there is very good evidence of self-evaluation leading to improvement in the provision.
- The early years specialist, from the Early Years Organisation, has recently been appointed to the playgroup. She has worked with the leader to identify appropriately the support required to develop further the work of the playgroup; for example support with the development planning process.
- The playgroup has developed effective links with the parents through, for example, the regular, informative newsletters and parent workshops. There are very good pastoral links with the local primary schools which help the children's transition from the playgroup to the foundation stage.
- 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 reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Overall effectiveness

Forever Friends Playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON FOREVER FRIENDS CROSS COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	
Attending part-time	24
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	24
With statement of special educational needs	1
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	1
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0
With English as an additional language	7
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0

* 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.	0
Average attendance for the previous year.	92
Number of days open in previous school year	198

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	9.15 am-11.45 pm	

3. Details of staff

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

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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