

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Green Elves Playgroup, Greencastle, County Tyrone

Voluntary pre-school playgroup DE Ref No (2AB-0315)

Report of an Inspection in June 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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1. Context

Green Elves Playgroup is situated within purpose-built accommodation in the village of Greencastle County Tyrone. The playgroup has access to a spacious outdoor learning area. The children come mainly from the local area. There have been no changes in leadership since the previous inspection.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	16
Funded by Department of Education	16
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At Cop stages 1 or 2	0
With English as an additional language	0

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	95%
Number of days open in previous school year	188

Source: data provided by the setting.

fewer than 5

2. Views of parents and staff

Most of the parents responded to the questionnaires and their responses were all highly positive about the life and work of the playgroup. The majority of parents included written comments which highlighted in particular: the learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors; the friendly, welcoming atmosphere; the care shown to every child; and the attention given to special educational needs. All the staff responded positively and affirmed their support to help the children to learn.

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	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children, including a small number with additional needs, are making good to very good progress in nearly all areas of the pre-school programme.
- The children's social and physical development are key strengths. They are confident and motivated to engage in all the indoor and outdoor activities which support them to develop a sense of responsibility for the care of the learning environment and for growing plants. The children enjoy energetic activities and have well-developed gross motor skills including good hand- eye co-ordination skills.
- The children have very good listening skills. They are very attentive during story time and join in the repetitive phrases and recall familiar words used by the storyteller. They use good social and imaginative language in the role play areas and enjoy conversations with one another during snack and play. The children have a good interest in books and their early mark making is good.
- The children can sort and match and have a good understanding of measures and early counting concepts. Mathematical language during the snack, tidying routines and incidental play is appropriately developed for the time of the year.
- The children's problem solving skills and creative skills in dance and in making and responding to music are underdeveloped.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff provide a spacious learning environment with a good range of activities to engage the children's interests. The organisation of the day is well-structured to provide for lengthy periods of play including energetic play. There are smooth transitions at key times in the programme and the children are familiar with necessary routines.
- The staff plan using an effective range of interesting topics to provide meaningful activities and add a good variety of authentic resources which stimulate the children's curiosity and interest in the 'world around us' area of learning. The personal, social and emotional programme underpins all areas of the curriculum and the children are free to choose and explore through self-initiated play. The staff have appropriately identified the need to develop further the planning and assessment cycle in order to support further progression in all the areas of learning throughout the pre-school year.
- The consistently good quality adult engagement and interaction promotes well the children's language and communication skills. In the best practice, the staff are very good role models during imaginative play. They observe and actively listen to the children, allowing time for the children to develop their play; appropriately intervening to extend their language and thinking. There are missed opportunities to promote fully the learning inherent in the activities and provide sufficient challenge and progression for the time of the year.

- The staff observe, assess and record the children's progress and the parents are given regular feedback about their children's progress. There are procedures in place for referral to external support services for those children who may require assistance with aspects of their learning and development, and advice and signposting is provided for their parents. The role of the parent in sharing information from other professionals informs the work of the staff and has a beneficial impact on the children's progress in accessing the pre-school curriculum.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroups approach to the care and welfare of the children impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. There is an inclusive, nurturing approach to learning and development and as a result the children are respectful of each other and their behaviour is excellent.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership of the playgroup is committed to the development of the pre-school provision in the rural area and works effectively in partnership with the local community to extend the range of childcare and education services. Their effective actions have resulted in securing an additional funded programme for children in their penultimate pre-school year, a lending library and good parental engagement in the Big Bedtime Read. The staff work effectively as a team to promote continuous improvement in the pre-school programme.
- The staff have a three year development plan and good collaborative processes in place, along with the support of the early years specialist (EYS) from the Early Years Organisation (EYO), to identify appropriate areas for improvement which are shared with the management committee. The recent and relevant focus on the development of the provision for energetic outdoor play has led to very good outcomes for the children. The action planning processes require further development in order to promote high quality provision and outcomes for all the children across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- The playgroup has effective links with the local primary schools, relevant agencies and the local community to benefit the children, particularly the small number of children identified with additional needs, to transfer smoothly to year one.

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, the playgroup needs to:

- develop further the risk assessments procedures to manage potential risks; for example, on visits to the local village; and
- review and update aspects of the safeguarding policies in order to ensure that all the written policies are in line with the current requirements of the relevant Departments.

9. Overall effectiveness

Green Elves Playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.

There is an area for improvement that the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area for improvement is:

- to develop further the action planning processes in order to promote high quality provision and outcomes for all the children across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.

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 a representative of the board of directors;
- a meeting with the early years specialist; 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:

<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>

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