

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Greenlough Early Years,
Portglenone, County Antrim

Report of an Inspection in
June 2016

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 playgroup:

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 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 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.

Thirty percent of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaire and almost all of the responses were positive. The parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the work and life of the playgroup. In particular, the parents highlighted the progress their child had made and the considerate, professional and knowledgeable staff within the setting. All of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire, the responses of which were wholly positive. The findings from the questionnaires were shared and discussed with the representatives from the management group and the staff.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests 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

Greenlough Early Years Playgroup is located at the rear of St Oliver Plunkett's Hall, in the village of Clady. The leader has been in post from September 2015. The playgroup offers morning and afternoon session to pre-school children. At the time of the inspection there were 42 children attending the setting.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Important areas for improvement
Achievements and standards	Good
Provision for learning	Important Area for Improvement
Leadership and management	Important Area for Improvement

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are happy and settled and are making good progress in most aspects of their learning. They display independence in dressing, registering themselves for arrival and for snack time. A majority of children can engage in collaborative play within the playroom; however, many find it more difficult to sustain this in the outdoor area.
- All children responded well to the story and song session. A small number of the girls are beginning to show an interest in print and mark making. Those children, who are ready, do not have sufficient opportunities to develop further these skills; for example, progressing from using a picture symbol to using a name label.
- A majority of the children are beginning to show an interest in, and early understanding of, basic mathematical concepts such as number, shape and positional language.

6. Provision for learning

- The quality of the staff interactions with the children are satisfactory and, on occasion, good. The range of strategies for developing the children's learning, including the use of more open-ended questioning is, however, too limited to extend effectively the children's learning, language and thinking skills.
- Outdoor play and the transition to outdoor play do not ensure the safety and well-being of the children during free play and adult-organised activities.
- While the school has long- and short-term planning, the medium- term planning is not sufficiently detailed nor clearly enough focused on the intended learning in order to support development and progression. Staff operate a key worker system and conduct observations of the children; however, observations are neither regular, nor evaluated to inform future planning sufficiently and to ensure that the children's needs are fully met.
- Children who require additional support with aspects of their learning have been identified and individual plans have been drawn up. The targets in the plans are not focused closely enough on the individual needs of the children.
- The quality of the pastoral care in the playgroup is good. There is a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the playgroup and the working relationships between the staff and the children are good.
- The staff give good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, through the healthy break and the regular opportunities for energetic physical activity which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The processes for systematic self-evaluation, action planning and longer term development planning linked to improvement are not developed sufficiently.
- Effective links have been established with the parents and the local primary schools for the benefit of the children.

- The playgroup has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. However, appropriate risk assessments are not being conducted for visits to and from the playgroup. The intimate care policy requires amendment to reflect accurately the current practice within the setting. Clear routines with the children to ensure smooth transitions and the safety of all need to be established
- The playgroup has had several changes in early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation in recent years and, as a result, progress in developing understanding and use of the self evaluation process has been slow.

8. Overall effectiveness

Greenlough Early Years needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners:

The areas for improvement are:

- to ensure that the staff improve the quality of their interactions with the children and their use of observations to inform planning which meets the needs of all learners,
- for the leader and staff, with the support of the management committee and early years specialist, to develop further their understanding and use of the process of self-evaluation, to ensure continued improvements within the playgroup and,
- to address the safeguarding issues.

The ETI will monitor and report on the playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. The ETI will conduct a follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON GREENLOUGH EARLY YEARS

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time		
Attending part-time	24	18
Under 3 years of age*		
Funded by Department of Education	24	18
With statement of special educational needs	&	
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**	&	
With English as an additional language	&	
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school		

* On 1 July.

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

& = fewer than 5

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	3
Average attendance for the previous year.	88.8
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	8.45am- 11.15am	12.15pm – 2.45pm

3. Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	3	1
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	1
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within the previous 12 months	1	1

Number of: ***	
Students	&
Trainees	

*** Total placements since September of current year

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