

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Happy Days Playgroup,
Coalisland, County Tyrone

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in
November 2017



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

Happy Days Playgroup is accommodated in a purpose-built mobile on School Road, Coalisland. The staff and members of the management group have served the group for many years and have provided excellent resources and high quality provision both indoors and outdoors. In recent years the playgroup's numbers have dropped due to the increase of pre-school provision in the local area. The staff have undertaken additional training and offer the 'Eager and Able to Learn' programme for younger children in the community.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	11
Funded by Department of Education	11
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#
With English as an additional language	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	92
Number of days open in previous school year	191

Source: data provided by the setting.

* 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

2. Views of parents and staff

A small number of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses were positive.

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	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
Quality of provision	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are very well-settled, friendly and confident; they are making very good progress in all aspects of their learning and development. They are developing very positive attitudes and dispositions for learning; they play productively for sustained periods throughout the session. They show respect and responsibility for their environment and for one another during their activities and the daily routines.
- High priority is given to developing the children's language and literacy skills; the pre-school provides a language-rich environment; as a result the children are developing well their oral communication skills; they know a wide repertoire of rhymes and songs. They listen carefully and demonstrate very good attention during the enjoyable story sessions.
- The children's fine motor skills are very good and their mark-making and representational drawings are of a very good standard.
- The children make confident, imaginative and independent use of the creative materials provided for their play. They often work collaboratively to paint, make simple models and experiment with colour and pattern. The children's role play is very well developed in the home and construction areas. There is a high level of investigative and exploratory play both indoors and outdoors.
- The children explore and investigate the wide range of interesting activities available to them. They display high levels of independence and self-esteem and are happy to talk about their play. They spend lengthy periods at self-chosen activities and the quality of their work is often of a high standard.
- The children who require support with aspects of their learning respond very well to the strategies deployed. They meet the targets set by the staff and are making very good progress in line with their ability.

6. Quality of provision

- The playroom and outdoor areas are very well presented, providing an attractive and stimulating learning environment for the children to explore. The daily timetable is well organised; well established routines are used very well to support learning.
- The quality of the care and welfare provided by the staff is outstanding. They provide an inclusive and respectful ethos. The children's behaviour is excellent.
- All of the staff are very skilful in their interactions with the children. They introduce mathematical concepts and ideas naturally through play. The staff use appropriate open-ended questions regularly to foster the children's thinking skills and provide them with additional resources to extend their language and learning.

- The staff plan the programme together regularly; the planning indicates a wide range of interesting activities that support the development of the children's skills throughout the year. Going forward, the staff should highlight more clearly the learning across all areas of the programme. The staff have developed an appropriate system of observation and assessment to track the children's progress.
- The children are provided with a healthy snack and regular physical activity, which the children clearly enjoy.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff work together very effectively as a team in the best interest of the children. All of the staff have a caring approach and clearly enjoy their work with the children. The playgroup's development plan outlines appropriate targets for improvement. The staff make insightful evaluations of their practice and can show the improvements they have made in various aspects of their provision. There is evidence that this process has enhanced the provision and the children's learning experiences. The staff value the excellent support provided by their early years specialist from the Early Year's Organisation.
- The centre has a wide range of additional resources to support a progressive play programme which enhances the children's play and learning. Much attention is given to the continuing professional development of the staff; there is evidence that their attendance at a wide range of relevant courses, particularly for the development of special educational needs provision, is having a positive impact on their work and is enhancing the learning opportunities provided for the children.
- The parents are kept informed of the work and life of the pre-school through, for example, the monthly newsletters and interviews. There are very good links with the neighbouring primary schools and the local community.

8. Safeguarding

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the relevant Departments.

9. Overall effectiveness

Happy Days 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.

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 those involved with leadership and management, including a representative the management group; 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 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 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.
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.
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.
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.

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