

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Happy Faces Playgroup,  
Clady, County Tyrone

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in  
February 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



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## 1. Context

Happy Faces Playgroup is located in purpose built accommodation in the grounds of the local GAA club. The children attending the playgroup come from the surrounding area. A new leader and deputy leader have been appointed in the last eighteen months.

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending part-time	16
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	12
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	95
Number of days open in previous school year	185

**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

Thirty-one percent of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. All of the responses were positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. The small number of comments highlighted the kind and caring staff and the welcoming environment provided for the children, parents and visitors.

## 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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
<b>Quality of provision</b>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Important areas for improvement

## 5. Outcomes for learners

- A majority of the children are well-settled and engage in concentrated periods of purposeful play. They are developing good levels of independence and are able to access the resources they need to extend their play.

- The children use a range of mathematical vocabulary to talk about number, shape, colours, length and time. They showed an interest in books in the reading area; this interest could be extended by the provision of reading material in other areas of the playroom. Most of the children listen well and respond confidently to the adults. While most of the children enjoy the story time session a minority are not able to sustain their engagement and concentration levels.
- The children's art work is displayed around the playroom and the children are able to access a range of resources to paint and make interesting junk models. The children enjoyed experimenting with the musical instruments and expressing their own ideas through music-making.
- The children's fine motor skills are developing well through, for example, the use of chopsticks, mini spades, tools and real cutlery. The children engage actively in outdoor activities using wheeled vehicles and playing games involving running, jumping and throwing. There is a need to carry out a risk assessment on the sloping area used for wheeled vehicles.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- The staff plan regularly across the six areas of the pre-school curriculum; however the planning does not consider the full range of learning that can be gained from each activity. The observations and assessment, although carried out regularly, are descriptive of the children's activities and do not evaluate their learning to inform future planning and ensure consistency in progression.
- While most of the staff interactions are good, during the inspection there were missed opportunities within the play activities for the staff to fully exploit the learning available from the range of resources provided. In the best practice, the staff use open-ended questioning to extend the children's learning and model language which the children use to express ideas and interests.
- The playroom is well-organised; of particular note is the construction area which is well resourced with a range of tools, building materials and measuring devices. The home corner was adapted well into a Chinese themed restaurant and provided a range of learning experiences across the pre-school curriculum. The children make good use of all of the areas and are able to extend their play through access to a range of imaginative and creative resources.
- Individual education plans are in place but require more specific and achievable targets that can be met within a specified time frame. There are good interventions in place for behaviour but these need to be applied consistently throughout the session.
- Based on the evidence at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on outcomes. The staff treat the children with kindness and respect and create a caring and welcoming environment where the children are relaxed and happy to engage with their peers and the adults.
- The leaders discuss the importance of healthy eating with the children during the snack routine and provide opportunities to develop independence and social skills but the transition period is too long and does not ensure a smooth transition.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The self-evaluation processes leading to improvement are underdeveloped and do not identify focused, strategic and purposeful areas for improvement. The playgroup has come through a significant period of change in staffing. The leader and deputy leader have taken up their posts in the playgroup relatively recently and, along with the assistant, are working well as team. They recognise their strengths and are supported in their work by the management committee and the early year's specialist.
- The playgroup has good links with the parents, local schools, the community and external agencies. Parental views are regularly sought, welcomed and acted upon and effective transitions are in place with the local feeder primary schools. The playgroup has recently joined the 'Sharing from the Start' programme and has initiated a cross-border shared education link.

## **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. With the support of the management committee and the early years specialist the staff should continue to review and update the safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure they are fully compliant.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Happy Faces Playgroup needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are:

- to develop further the planning, observation and assessment to inform learning leading to improved outcomes for the children; and
- to further develop the process of self-evaluation to identify appropriate priorities and promote strategic improvement in the playgroup.

The ETI will monitor and report on the school's/playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

**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 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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