

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Irvinestown Community
Playgroup, Irvinestown,
County Fermanagh

Report of an Inspection in
May 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing Inspection Services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
Department for Communities

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 meeting with those involved with leadership and management including the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete confidential questionnaires.

A majority of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential, online questionnaires. Overall, the responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision and the parents added written comments expressing appreciation for the work of the staff. The responses were shared with the staff and management group.

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

Irvinestown Community Playgroup is located in a former school building which is converted to a pre-school playgroup. The leader is new in post since the previous inspection in February 2008.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are independent, safe and secure in the daily routines. On arrival, they read their names to self-register before making choices of their preferred area of play and settle quickly to concentrated, purposeful learning. The children are very well-behaved.
- Most of the children are developing appropriate speech and language skills and have very good mark-making and representational artwork skills. They have very good gross motor skills and enjoy running, jumping and climbing in the outdoors. Mathematical concepts about number and, shape and space are well-developed.
- The children show a high level of interest in caring for living creatures. They have very well-developed observational skills and are keen to explore and experiment with high levels of curiosity. They can compare the picture and the stage of development of the tadpoles and butterfly using a book or a digital device.

6. Provision for learning

- The high quality of the provision for outdoor learning and the use of the local environment to promote scientific awareness are significant strengths of the playgroup. Very good attention is given to meeting the needs of the boys and the staff provide stimulating learning experiences to motivate and sustain concentrated learning about road works and safe building with blocks.
- The staff plan and assess effectively the children's progress and development and address the specific needs and interests of the individual children. They keep detailed records of the children's progress and development which are linked to the planned programme. A broad and balanced pre-school programme for the children includes all areas of the pre-school curriculum and ensures progression in the resources, activities and learning experiences of the children.
- The close involvement of the staff engages the children in stimulating and challenging play. The staff interactions with the children are of a high quality. They extend the children's language and thinking by building effectively on their interests and ideas to sustain curiosity and investigation.
- The quality of the provision for the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning is very good. The children's language and all round development is observed carefully and the staff intervene early to inform the parents about potential developmental delay or speech and language difficulties.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. The working relationships at all levels are excellent. There is a calm and caring ethos which influences the life and work of the playgroup. The staff know the children well; they respond with prompt and purposeful attention to their needs and interests. The effective use of positive behaviour management strategies supports the children's self- management skills and good behaviour.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity; the children enjoy healthy snacks which they prepare and participate in a varied range of energetic physical activities.

7. Leadership and management

- The playgroup leader and staff have a high level of teamwork and sustain a stimulating pre-school programme. There are reflective approaches and appropriate priorities identified for improvement. The staff are meeting the needs of individual children and use well-developed methods which inform short-term actions to promote improvement. The management committee are supportive of the further development of a three-year development plan cycle.
- The parents are kept well-informed through newsletters, daily updates and have very good opportunities to discuss their children's progress and development. Effective links are maintained with the local primary schools to which the children transfer to their year one classes.
- The early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation provides very good levels of professional support to the staff. The specific focus on the evaluation of the children's learning and the development of the provision supports an ongoing culture of improvement.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Overall effectiveness

Irvinestown Community 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.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON IVRINESTOWN COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, COUNTY FERMANAGH

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	0
Attending part-time	24
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	24
With statement of special educational needs	0
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**	0
With English as an additional language	*
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.	24%
Average attendance for the previous year.	89%
Number of days open in previous school year	188

2. Duration of sessions

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

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		1

Number of: ***	
Students	2
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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