

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Jack and Jill Playgroup,
Cookstown, County Tyrone

Voluntary pre-school playgroup

Report of an Inspection in
September 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

Jack and Jill playgroup is located on Loy Street in Cookstown, County Tyrone. The playgroup has experienced a period of change in the past two years; an acting leader was in charge and the staff received support from two early years specialists. As a result of additional pre-school provision being provided in local schools the number of children attending the playgroup has reduced significantly.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	16
Funded by Department of Education	16
With statement of special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	81%
Number of days open in previous school year	186

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

Just over a third of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All responses were highly positive about the work of the preschool.

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

- All of the children are well settled; they are at ease with the staff and turn to them confidently for help and support. Most of the children play with purpose and concentration. The children are largely independent; for example, they self-register on arrival, they access and choose resources required for their learning and manage their personal care confidently.

- Most of the children are interested in books and stories; they listen attentively during the story session and join in traditional rhymes. The children are beginning to mark make and a few are producing representational art work.
- The children with additional needs are building trusting relationships with the staff and, with sensitive support, are gradually developing their emotional, social and communication skills.

6. Quality of provision

- The short-term planning does not include the learning inherent within each of the areas of play. This aspect needs to be developed to identify clearly the learning potential across the six areas of the curriculum and outline the intended progress in the children's learning through the use of resources. The staff are not linking information from their observations and evaluations closely enough to the planning to ensure progression in the children's learning.
- The staff have developed the secure outdoor space which is used regularly for a range of learning experiences by the children. The staff are not planning with sufficient care to maximise learning and especially the development of the children's gross motor skills in the outdoor area. They have worked successfully to create an attractive learning environment indoors. The playroom is divided into distinct play areas with accessible resources to extend the activities. The children's work is valued and celebrated in displays within the playroom.
- The quality of interactions between the staff and children is good and, on occasions, very good. The staff are caring and supportive of the children's own ideas; they promote well the children's language and learning through sustained conversations.
- Staff members have benefited from training to support children with additional needs. The staff incorporate appropriately a range of strategies to support those children who are experiencing difficulty with aspects of their learning.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on their learning and development. The children are forming positive relationships with the adults and one another which is evident in their developing social skills, good behaviour and the inclusion of others from a range of different cultural backgrounds and needs.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff team are working collaboratively and with commitment to develop evaluation and improvement in the playgroup's provision. The development plan outlines prioritised areas for improvement. The associated action plans however do not focus specifically enough on the impact of the actions on the intended improvement on the children's learning.
- The management group is very supportive of the staff and the work of the playgroup. The group employ the service of an early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation. Over the past two years the support provided has been insufficient in addressing the needs of the playgroup. Recently, a new early years specialist was assigned to the group; it will be important that she works closely with the staff to support them in developing those aspects identified within the report and in the more rigorous evaluation of their practice.

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

Jack and Jill playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the children.

There are areas for improvement that the preschool school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The areas for improvement are to:

- develop further the weekly planning to outline clearly the learning potential inherent in the activities; and
- use the information from observations of the children's play to inform the planning process more effectively to meet the children's needs.

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 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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