

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Kids Kabin Pre-School, Castlewellan, County Down

Voluntary playgroup DE Ref No: 4AB-0176

Report of an Inspection in October 2019

CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. Context	1
2. Views of parents and staff	1
3. Focus of the inspection	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	1
5. Outcomes for learners	2
6. Quality of provision	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Safeguarding	3
9. Overall effectiveness	3

Appendices

- A. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- B. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

1. Context

Kids Kabin Pre-School is located in mobile accommodation in the townland of Drumaroad, approximately seven miles from the town of Castlewellan. All of the children come from the surrounding rural area. There has been a change in leadership and staffing since the last inspection. At the time of the inspection, there was instability in staffing.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	20
Attending part-time	5
Funded by Department of Education	20
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	N/A
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	N/A
Number of days open in previous school year	190

Source: data provided by the setting.

fewer than 5

N/A not available

2. Views of parents and staff

A significant minority of the parents and staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The majority of the parental responses were very positive about the life and work of the playgroup. The small number of written comments highlighted in particular: the friendly, welcoming atmosphere; the good communication with parents; and the progress of the children. A summary of the questionnaire responses was shared with the leader.

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	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Important areas for improvement
Quality of provision	Requires significant improvement
Leadership and management	Requires urgent improvement

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are not making sufficient progress across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum. While most of the children are beginning to count and are developing an awareness of one-to-one correspondence, the majority of the children do not use readily mathematical language when playing in the various areas and their early mathematical skills are underdeveloped.
- The children's interest in, and curiosity of, the world around them is underdeveloped for the time of year. The majority of children are not developing sufficiently their creativity and imagination through role play and artwork. During the inspection, a small number of children were observed experimenting with percussion instruments.
- Most of the children are interested in books. They enjoy browsing books in the attractive book corner, listen attentively during story time and talk about the pictures and characters in the books. The children's interest in mark-making is less well developed.
- Overall, the children are well settled for the time of year. They engage confidently with staff, visitors and each other and are developing well their independence through, for example, the snack routine.

6. Quality of provision

- The planning and assessment methods require significant improvement. This is due principally to the instability in staffing and the lack of specialist advice. While the staff are caring and supportive in their interactions with the children, they do not know the children well enough and do not have a good understanding of the children's current learning needs. Consequently, the interactions are regulatory and do not promote, develop and extend sufficiently the children's learning.
- Provision and progression for most areas of learning in the pre-school curriculum is underdeveloped, particularly: early mathematical development; the world around us; the arts; and outdoor play provision. There is a lack of authentic and natural resources to stimulate the children's curiosity, imagination, and observational skills. The development of children's personal, social and emotional skills is, however, a particular strength of the provision.
- The organisation of the day is not being used to maximise the children's learning. There are too many interruptions throughout the session which impacts adversely on the children's concentration.
- The playroom is bright, clean and attractive with a range of resources that are readily accessible to the children.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare does not impact positively enough on learning and teaching, and outcomes.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the pre-school is not effective enough in working collaboratively to plan, implement and evaluate high quality pre-school education. The ongoing instability in staffing and the lack of a suitably experienced early years' specialist, are impeding progress at all levels.
- Overall, the pre-school's approach to self-evaluation requires significant improvement. While there is a development plan in place, there are no supporting action plans to guide the staff in their improvement work. At the time of the inspection, there was limited evidence of self-evaluation being undertaken.
- Parents are informed of how they can support their children through an informative monthly newsletter.

8. Safeguarding

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children are unsatisfactory. The areas which must be improved urgently include:
 - ensuring that all voluntary members of staff are fully conversant in the child protection and safeguarding procedures of the pre-school;
 - ensuring that the management committee sign annually the record of complaints against staff; and
 - ensuring the designated person on the management committee has received the relevant training.

9. Overall effectiveness

Kids Kabin Pre-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 areas for improvement are to:

- address the instability in staffing in order to provide high quality learning experiences for all of the children;
- appoint an Early Years' Specialist with the necessary experience and skill to support the staff;
- improve the quality, planning and assessment of the pre-school curriculum;
- improve the quality of the staff interactions to promote the children's learning;
- review the organisation of the day to make the most effective use of the time available;
- improve the skills and knowledge of leadership and management to monitor and evaluate effectively the quality of the provision; and
- address the unsatisfactory safeguarding.

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 in 18 to 24 months.

The ETI will also return to the playgroup within six weeks to monitor and report on progress in addressing the safeguarding issues¹.

¹ The Department of Education will seek assurance from the relevant authority that they are working with the playgroup in relation to the inspection report.

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; 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 management²:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

² And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

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.

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF KIDS KABIN PRE-SCHOOL ON 10 OCTOBER 2019

SAFEGUARDING

In line with the child protection/safeguarding procedures of the Education and Training Inspectorate, the ETI returned to Kids Kabin Pre-School as a follow-up to the inspection which took place on 10 October 2019; the purpose of the visit was to ensure that the safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory in the inspection, had been addressed.

On the basis of the evidence available, the revised arrangements continue to be unsatisfactory. In particular, the pre-school needs to:

- ensure the designated person on the management committee has received the relevant training; and
- carry out robust risk assessments for all educational activities and trips off the premises.

During the interim period, the pre-school has not received any external support. Currently, the pre-school does not employ an early years' specialist.

Further action will be considered by the Department of Education.

FURTHER (2nd) ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF KIDS KABIN PLAYGROUP (4AB-0176) IN NOVEMBER 2019

SAFEGUARDING

The Education and Training Inspectorate returned to Kids Kabin Playgroup on 21 May 2021 as a follow-up to the safeguarding inspection which took place on 29 November 2019; the purpose of the visit was to ensure that the safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory in the inspection, had been addressed.

Since the last visit key changes include:

- the appointment of suitably qualified staff, including a deputy leader;
- the completion of safeguarding training by all staff and the management;
- the development of robust risk assessments for visits; and
- the review and amendment of relevant safeguarding policies and procedures, including the development of additional policies and procedures to protect the children, staff and parents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the basis of the evidence available, the revised arrangements reflect the requirements of the relevant Departments.

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