

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Kids R Us Cross-Community
Playgroup, Fivemiletown,
Co Tyrone

Report of an inspection in
March 2015

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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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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's publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors observed teaching and learning through play, the children's achievements and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, engaged with the children and held discussions with the leader and staff.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a discussion with the staff;
- a meeting with those involved with leadership and management; and
- the opportunity for the parents, staff and members of the management group to complete a confidential questionnaire or to meet with the inspection team.

Thirty-seven percent of the parents responded to the questionnaire and the majority of them included additional written comments. The responses were highly positive and indicated a very high level of satisfaction with almost all aspects of the setting's work; in particular, the parents praised the extremely caring and dedicated staff, the varied learning experiences provided for the children and the progress their children have made. The responses from the staff questionnaires were very positive and highlighted the team spirit and the focus on meeting each child's individual needs. A summary of the responses has been shared with the leader and a representative of the management committee.

2. Context

Kids R Us Cross-community Playgroup is accommodated in a pre-fabricated building and is situated in Fivemiletown, County Tyrone. A new leader and an additional assistant have been appointed in the current year and a new independent early years specialist engaged. At the time of the inspection, the majority of the children attending the playgroup were in their penultimate pre-school year. The playgroup provides an optional cooked lunch for the children which is supplied by a local restaurant.

3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards;
- the quality of provision; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall findings

Overall Performance Level	Very good
Achievements and Standards	Very good
Provision	Very good
Leadership and Management	Very good

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are well-settled and engage in purposeful and sustained play. They access independently the learning and play resources they require and are confident in the playroom and with the routines of the day. The children collaborate well and engage confidently with each other in discussions about their play.
- Most of the children have good language skills and all are confident in approaching the adults for help and support when required. The children, with appropriate adult assistance, make very good use of technology to make voice recordings in which they describe their learning and particularly their art work. A number of the children can recognise both their own name and the names of the other children. The children have very good fine motor skills and, during the inspection, they were confident in cutting fruit and vegetables, operating locks and keys and threading nuts and bolts.
- The children are beginning to understand and use early mathematical language, for example, by comparing size and weight. They have a keen interest in the World around Us and are developing well their observation skills and using their senses in exploring and investigating the natural resources provided.

6. Provision

- The staff provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment both indoor and outdoors. The daily routines offers very good opportunities for the children to develop their independence and all parts of the day are used well to promote learning.
- The staff interactions with the children are consistently very good. They encourage successfully a sense of excitement and foster well the children's natural curiosity in learning through the effective use of open-ended questions and problem-solving approaches. The broad and balanced programme provides very good opportunities for learning across the majority of the areas of the pre-school curriculum. A key strength of the provision is the high quality of the children's learning through the World around Us.

- The weekly planning is of a very good quality; it guides effectively the staff and ensures that they have a shared understanding of the learning to be developed. The planning is well evaluated with a clear focus on the children's learning and is adapted to meet the needs and interests of the children. A good start has been made in developing the planning for outdoor play. The staff have appropriately identified the need to develop further the medium- and long-term planning.
- The staff know the children well and respond very effectively in providing an appropriate programme to meet their individual needs. The staff are currently developing their system for recording meaningful observations of the children's learning to create a profile of each child's learning across the areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff should now ensure that they develop an efficient system to show more clearly how their assessments of the children's learning are informing their future planning.
- The playgroup provides high quality support for the children identified as having special educational needs. There is a detailed policy in place and the individual education plans with appropriate targets and strategies are regularly reviewed and informed effectively by the observations and assessments of the children's learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is outstanding. There is a welcoming and inclusive ethos and an atmosphere of respect among the adults and the children. The positive behaviour strategies are applied consistently by the staff, and, as a result, the children are very well-behaved and are encouraged to share and take turns. The children's work is celebrated in attractive displays which include the children's own words in speech bubbles or using the electronic recording devices.
- The playgroup gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the healthy break, the dental hygiene routine, the encouragement to experiment and try new foods and the very good opportunities for physical activity, all of which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader has a clear vision, is highly motivated and has demonstrated a very good commitment to the continued development of the playgroup. There is a very good team approach among the staff and the leader is an excellent role-model in her practice. The independent early years specialist (IEYS) has provided very good, focused support for the playgroup.
- After careful self-evaluation the staff changed their practice from a child-initiated approach and now follow the Pre-school Curricular guidance. There is a three-year development plan in place with good quality supporting action plans and evidence of on-going evaluation of the progress made and the impact on the children's learning. The staff reflect regularly on their own practice through monthly one-to-one appraisals with the leader and these are used to identify strengths and areas for improvement, and to inform future staff development needs.

- The playgroup has established very good links with the parents and the monthly newsletter provides good information on the life and work of the playgroup. In developing this further, the staff should also include more detailed information for parents on how they can support their child's learning at home. The staff make very good use of a wide range of visitors to the playgroup and this enhances well the children's educational experiences.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school is very good. The pre-school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION KIDS R US PLAYGROUP

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	30	
in their immediate pre-school year	8	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	8	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	*	
with a statement of special educational needs	0	
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	*	
with English as an additional language	*	
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	*	

* Denotes fewer than five

Attendance** of funded children for the previous school year.	85%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session
3¾ hours	

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	2	1
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	2	1
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	1	1

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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