

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Kilbride Playgroup, Ballyclare,
County Antrim

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in
March 2018



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

Kilbride playgroup is accommodated in a community hall in the village of Burnside outside Doagh.

A small number of younger fee paying children, in their penultimate pre-school year, attend the session. Since the last inspection, a new member of staff and a new independent early year's specialist have been appointed. A small area to the back of the building is being developed for outdoor play; parking is very limited.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	22
Under 3 years of age	6
Funded by Department of Education	16
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**	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	N/A
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

Almost all of the parental responses and all of the staff responses to the questionnaire were positive about all aspects of the playgroup provision. A small number of parents were less satisfied with the range of planned learning experiences being provided. All of the responses have been shared with the leadership and management.

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	Important areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Important areas for improvement
Quality of provision	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children's physical skills, imaginative and creative expression, investigation and exploration are not sufficiently developed, however, the children are developing well their social behaviours, language and communication skills.
- Most of the children settle quickly and engage well as they participate in a range of freely chosen play activities in the playroom. They co-operate well with the daily routines and a majority collaborate together to develop their own ideas in areas of play. A small number of children require more adult support to settle to more productive and sustained play.
- A majority of the children have well developed language and communication skills. They talk confidently with the staff and have extended conversations with each other using a good range of vocabulary. They participate very well during the enjoyable music and rhyme session and understand concepts such as loud and soft. The children are increasingly aware of print in the environment and have a high level of interest in mark making and emergent writing. On the day of the inspection visit the children showed a limited interest in books and a significant minority did not listen attentively during the group story session. The children identified with speech and language delays are developing confidence but require more focused, planned adult support to develop further their language and communication skills.
- Most of the children use a range of tools at the dough, creative and role play areas with increasing competence. The children are aware of number and enjoy counting during their play and at rhyme time and they understand the sequence of the daily timetable; their use of a wider range of early mathematical language is more limited.
- The children select and use the creative materials independently to make simple collage work, explore colour and experiment with paint. While a few children make detailed representational drawings overall the children's art work is underdeveloped for the time of year. Small groups of children spend sustained periods in the home and block play area expressing their thoughts and developing their ideas both independently and with the adults. The children explore the properties of natural materials available in the home play, creative area and sand and water with interest.

6. Quality of provision

- The planned learning experiences are not of a sufficiently high quality to provide consistent progression in learning across all six areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- The playroom is set out into distinct areas for learning enhanced by accessible storage of materials to support independence, the addition of natural and real materials, a visual timetable of the day and displays of the children's own art work. The book area, sand and water play, table top toys and outdoor play experiences did not sustain the children's interest and need to be reviewed and improved. There are very limited opportunities for physical play to enable the children to practice and develop the use of their gross motor skills.

- While the staff plan together regularly, the current planning and assessment methods are not fully understood by the staff to guide them sufficiently in their implementation of a rich and stimulating pre-school programme. There is very limited focus on an evaluation of the learning taking place and insufficient tracking of children's progress. The assessment information is used to identify children who require support with their learning and individual plans are being developed; however these do not identify sufficiently the strategies to be used to support their next step in learning.
- The staff welcome the children warmly and engage with them at their level throughout the session in a supportive and affirming manner. In a majority of their interactions, the staff listen and build on the children's own ideas, promote language and ask open ended questions to extend their thinking. However, there are missed opportunities to extend language, independence and learning; in particular a breadth of early mathematical language and encouragement for close observation, investigation and discovery.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on the children's personal and social development. They are well settled, co-operate with staff and one another and manage the daily routines with independence.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management do not have a sufficiently high expectation and awareness of the core elements of high quality pre-school education. The use of self-evaluation linked to improvement is underdeveloped. The new independent early year's specialist has provided very good support and guidance for the staff; she has identified both strengths and areas for improvement which are in line with the inspection findings. The action plans set out a number of relevant targets which now need to be refined in light of the inspection findings, understood and implemented more fully by the staff.
- There have been recent improvements in the quality of the music programme and the development of an outdoor space is currently in progress. The management committee provide valued support in raising funds to enhance the playgroup resources. They require further training in their role with more of a focus on quality and improvement.
- There are useful links with the local primary school and information is transferred to contribute to smooth transitions.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the relevant Departments. However, Kilbride playgroup needs to ensure that:

- risk assessment are comprehensive for all outings;
- the child protection policy includes guidance on how to identify the types and signs of abuse; and
- the promoting positive behaviour policy sets out more clearly the rules and strategies used.

9. Overall effectiveness

Kilbride Playgroup needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all learners. The areas for improvement include the need to:

- improve the provision for the children to develop their energetic and physical play, observational and investigative skills, interest in books and their creative expression;
- develop the skills and understanding of the whole staff team in planning and implementing a high quality pre-school programme that is well matched to the needs and interests of the children;
- evaluate the learning and track more effectively the children's progress; and
- develop effective leadership and management with high expectations of quality provision and a clear focus on self-evaluation to promote improvement.

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 12 to 18 month.

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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