

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Little Amps Early Years,  
Maghera, County Londonderry

Report of an inspection in  
December 2015

*eti*

*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 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 continue to 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 continue to 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 discussion with the staff;
- 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.

All of the staff completed questionnaires and were wholly positive about the life and work of the playgroup. A significant number of the parents completed questionnaires; a majority of these included positive written comments praising the staff and the quality of the provision. All of the findings from the questionnaires were shared and discussed with the representatives from the management committee and the staff.

## 2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests 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

Little Amps Early Years Playgroup is located in the grounds of Ampertaine Primary School. Since the last inspection, the playgroup has acquired new mobile premises.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

## **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children are very well settled and often engage in focused and purposeful play. Almost all demonstrate good levels of independence in their play and also in the snack routine. They show respect for the needs of others in the group and their behaviour is exemplary. When faced with a challenge, the children persevere with the task and are keen to celebrate their achievements. The quality of the children's work is of a high standard and shows good attention to detail.
- The indoor learning environment provides very good opportunities for the children to develop their fine manipulative skills and their pre-reading and writing skills. A small number make good attempts at mark making and attempt to write letters in their name. The children listen attentively to stories, join in enthusiastically with the rhymes and songs and enjoy browsing through the many books available in the book area and in the areas of play.
- The children approach the staff with ease and can talk confidently about their work and experiences. In the imaginative role play areas, they have valuable opportunities to engage with their peers and to act out real-life scenarios, such as, preparing a meal in the house or buying or selling items in the post office.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The quality of pastoral care is very good. There is a friendly, caring ethos in the playgroup and the working relationships at all levels are very good. The indoor learning environment is laid out in distinct areas and good use is made of the children's art work in displays. The staff promote learning and teaching effectively across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff have identified the need to develop aspects of the physical play programme and have plans to develop the links with the neighbouring primary school and the outdoor learning environment. In doing so, the staff need to ensure that sufficient consideration and time is given to providing more opportunities to promote and develop energetic physical play throughout the year.
- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently of a high quality. The children's responses are noted regularly by the staff and are used to inform future learning and teaching. The information gained is also shared with the parents throughout the year. The written planning for the development of outdoor learning and physical activity needs to be developed further by the staff.
- The organisation of the day is managed well to provide a good balance between free play and activities organised by the staff. They need to provide more time, in the daily programme, for the children to engage in active outdoor play.
- The children in the group who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified at an early stage and appropriate steps are in place to help address their specific needs.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and the daily programme includes a healthy snack.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The staff work very well as a team and have identified appropriate areas for development to enhance the provision for the children.
- Effective links have been established with the parents and the local primary school for the benefit of the children.
- The playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Department.
- The playgroup employs the services of an independent early years specialist to support the staff in their work. Both parties reported very good working relationships. The development of the physical play programme should now be a priority for support.

## **8. Overall Effectiveness**

The playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON LITTLE AMPS EARLY YEARS

1. Details of children

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Attending full-time			
Attending part-time	19		
Under 3 years of age*			
Funded by Department of Education	19		
With statement of special educational needs			
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	5		
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	1		
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	4		
With English as an additional language			
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school			

\* 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.	2
Average attendance for the previous year.	
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
	8.45-11.15	

3. Details of staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders		5
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		5
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		
New appointments within the previous 12 months		

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	1
Trainees	

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

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