

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Little Rascals Community
Playgroup, Drumsurn,
Co Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in
April 2015

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

Contents

Section	Page
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Context	1
3. Focus of inspection	1
4. Overall findings	1
5. Achievements and standards	2
6. Provision	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Conclusion	3
Appendices	

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, 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; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire or to meet with the inspection team.

Twenty -two percent of the parents responded to the questionnaire and were wholly positive about all aspects of the educational and pastoral provision provided by the setting. The staff responses were very positive. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and management of the pre-school setting.

2. Context

Little Rascals Community Playgroup is situated in a purpose- built mobile building in grounds to the rear of the local primary school. The playgroup operates one part-time session for children from the local area. Eighteen children are in their immediate pre-school year. The leader and the staff have been in post since the last inspection in 2007 and have recently acquired funding for a new building and outdoor play area.

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

- All of the children are very well settled and engage in purposeful, concentrated play. They access independently the learning and play resources they require and make very good use of the available play areas. The children are happy and are confident with the well-established routines.
- The children are developing very good social and communication skills. They play collaboratively, for example, in the home corner and at the sand and water areas and interact confidently with staff and visitors. The children show a keen interest in the books around the playroom and, in the quiet area, they enjoy the large and small group story sessions. The children make good use of the opportunities to mark make and experiment with early writing.
- During the inspection, the children were observed matching, sorting, making patterns and using timers to self-manage their turn-taking. The children make very good use of the attractive outdoor learning environment. They develop well their gross motor skills and show very good levels of interest in the world around them.

6. Provision

- The staff have worked diligently to create a stimulating and safe indoor and outdoor learning environment. The children's work is valued and displayed attractively throughout the playroom. The snack time and daily routines are used very well to develop the children's independence and self-management skills.
- The staff interactions with the children are always of a very good quality. The staff model good play and develop the children's language and thinking through sustained discussions and open-ended questions. The staff listen carefully to the children and respond appropriately to their ideas.
- The children's educational programme is well balanced with very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The planning is comprehensive and guides well the work of the staff with the children. It is well informed by the thorough and rigorous system for observing the children at play and assessing the progress in their learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. There is a welcoming and inclusive ethos in the playgroup. The staff have a consistent, positive and respectful approach with the children which encourage the children to be well behaved, to share and to play collaboratively.
- The staff give very good attention to the promotion of healthy eating through the provision of healthy snacks. The children have regular opportunities to engage in energetic physical activity outdoors.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader has a clear vision for the continued development of the playgroup and its role in the community. She is a very good role model in her work with the children and is well supported by the skilful staff who have developed an effective team approach to all aspects of the work of the playgroup.
- The staff are highly reflective and have used the process of self-evaluation to bring about significant improvement in the playgroup's provision. They are currently working on the three- year development plan which is well supported by a very good evidence base.
- The early years specialist (EYS), from the Early Years Organisation, has provided good, focused support for the playgroup in the areas of planning and assessment.
- The playgroup has developed very good links with the parents through an informative induction meeting and regular newsletters. The parents are welcomed to the playroom at the beginning and end of each session. A particular strength of the playgroup is the development of effective links with the local community including the primary school and local businesses, which enhance the learning experiences of the children.
- 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 Departments.

8. Conclusion

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

STATISTICAL INFORMATION LITTLE RASCALS COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	21	
in their immediate pre-school year	18	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	18	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	18	
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	0	
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

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

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session
2½ hours	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	4	
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	1
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	

Number of: ***	
Students	3
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2015

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk