

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Lollipop Playgroup,  
Donaghmore, County Tyrone

Report of an inspection in  
December 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments

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 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 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, 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.

Thirty-six per cent of parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses indicated very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the playgroup provision. In particular, the parents highlighted the professionalism of the staff and the enjoyable, high quality learning experiences provided for the children.

## 2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children<sup>1</sup>, 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

Lollipop Playgroup is located on Hillview Avenue in the village of Donaghmore. Since the last inspection the playgroup has acquired purpose-built accommodation within the Torrent Complex and four new staff were appointed.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Outstanding
Provision for learning	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of a Day Nursery this refers only to the DE-funded pre-school provision.

## **5. Achievements and standards**

- Almost all of the children settle quickly on arrival and set about exploring and investigating the wide range of stimulating activities available to them. The quality of the children's work is often of a high standard and most of their paintings and drawings are detailed representations of the world around them as they see it. They display high levels of independence and self esteem and, when asked, are happy to discuss and explain their work.
- The children are confident in expressing their feelings and show a high regard for the views and opinions of others as well as for their environment. Much emphasis is placed on developing the children's personal, social, emotional and language development. The children display a very good understanding of early mathematical language and can often apply this in the correct context.
- A literacy-rich environment ensures that the children have excellent opportunities to develop their early writing skills. They browse with ease through the many books located around the playgroup. They enjoy stories, listening intently in story and group sessions, and join in songs and rhymes with enthusiasm.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The quality of the pastoral care is outstanding. A friendly, caring atmosphere based on mutual respect permeates the setting; relationships at all levels are excellent. The staff present the learning environment both indoors and outdoors to a very high standard and use every opportunity very effectively to promote language and learning across the pre-school curriculum. The behaviour of the children is exemplary.
- The organisation of the day is managed effectively to establish routines and smooth transition between activities.
- The quality of the staff interactions with the children are consistently of a very high quality. The children's ideas and interests are built upon and are incorporated often into the planning of the programme.
- The staff make excellent use of the children's art work and create topical displays to enhance the learning environment; the resources are presented in an attractive manner and are easily accessible, arousing curiosity and encouraging the children to explore and investigate all areas of the programme.
- The staff plan a varied and progressively challenging programme throughout the year. They use the information gained from their first hand knowledge of the children and observations of their responses to make appropriate adjustments to ensure that individual needs and interests are catered for very well.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified at an early stage and appropriate advice and guidance is sought to address their needs. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their children's learning and are provided with regular information on their progress.
- The staff promote healthy eating and allocate appropriate time for energetic physical activity.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The staff team work well together in the best interest of the children; they are supported and guided well by the leadership which sets high standards throughout. Effective links have been developed with the main feeder primary schools, appropriate support agencies and the local community. The management group are very supportive of the staff but also contribute effectively to school improvement.
- The staff engage continually in self-evaluation to improve their practice; an improvement plan helps to inform further cycles of development planning.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children which reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

Lollipop Playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON LOLLIPOP PLAYGROUP

1. Details of children

<b>Number of children:</b>	<u>Class 1</u>	<u>Class 2</u>
Attending full-time		
Attending part-time	26	26
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
Funded by Department of Education	26	26

\* On 1 July.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average attendance for the previous year.	95%
Number of days open in previous school year	183

2. Duration of sessions

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
	2 ½ hours	2 ½ hours

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	

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

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

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