

Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Loughshore Playgroup, Maghery, County Tyrone

Voluntary playgroup DE Ref No: 5BB-0597

Report of an Inspection in March 2020



Providing inspection services for:

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CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. Context	1
2. Views of parents and staff	1
3. Focus of the inspection	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	1
5. Outcomes for learners	2
6. Quality of provision	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Safeguarding	3
9. Overall effectiveness	3

Appendices

- A. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- B. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

1. Context

Loughshore Playgroup is located in a classroom within St Mary's Primary School, Maghery, County Tyrone. There has been a complete change in both staff and management committee since the last inspection.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	8
Attending part-time	5
Funded by Department of Education	8
With statement of special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2*	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	N/A
Number of days open in previous school year	185

Source: data provided by the setting.

* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

fewer than 5

N/A not available

2. Views of parents and staff

A small number of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaire; the responses were positive. There were no written comments. A summary of the questionnaire responses was shared with the leader and a representative from the management committee.

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	Good
Quality of provision	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement

5. Outcomes for learners

- Most of the children are well-settled and engage for sustained periods of time in purposeful and collaborative play. They have good levels of independence and self-management skills as they: follow the established routines; choose where they wish to play; put on their own aprons to play at the water; and engage in the tidy-up routine. The children are at ease with each other and with the staff and most share their ideas with confidence and enthusiasm. A small number of children require further support with aspects of their behaviour.
- Most of the children are making good progress across the majority of areas of the pre-school curriculum. They thoroughly enjoy the whole-group story and most contribute to the shared discussion about the book; many of the children access books independently during the session. Almost all of the children participate eagerly in the action songs and rhymes; a small number avail of the opportunities to compose their own music using the range of instruments available in the music corner. The children engage in and enjoy the opportunities available to them for role-play. The children's early mathematical understanding and investigative skills are underdeveloped for the time of year.
- The children's fine-motor skills are developing well, as they serve their own food and butter their own bread at break time, and manipulate with ease the range of small play equipment and tools across the playroom.

6. Quality of provision

- The cycle of planning, observation and assessment does not guide sufficiently the learning and teaching. The intended learning in the planning is too vague and does not show clear progression across all areas of learning. The staff have implemented recently a new approach to planning and are developing their understanding of the pre-school curriculum. Planning is in place for all areas of learning and on occasions observations of the children's learning are used appropriately to inform planning; however the quality of the observations is not consistent. The staff have identified appropriately the need to consider how they plan to meet the needs of the children who are in their penultimate pre-school year.
- The staff have been working to improve both the indoor and outdoor learning environments and have identified appropriate aspects for further improvement. There is a good range of natural and commercial resources available, which allows the children opportunities to develop their learning across a majority of areas of the curriculum. There are insufficient opportunities for the children to develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding and their investigative skills.
- The quality of the staff's interactions with the children requires improvement to promote further the children's thinking, creativity and curiosity.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on the outcomes for the children. The caring staff nurture the children's self-esteem and confidence.

7. Leadership and management

- The process of self-evaluation leading to improvement is underdeveloped. Although a start has been made to planning for improvement this practice is at an early stage. There is evidence of occasional reflective practice that has impacted positively on, for example, changes in the daily routine. The management committee and early years' specialist have recognised the need to work with the staff in developing a shared vision for the future of the setting and a robust approach to planning for improvement.
- Parents are consulted with and are kept informed about the life and work of the playgroup and their children's progress, through: email; social media; and regular newsletters. Effective links have been formed with the host primary school to support the children with transition to primary one.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the relevant departments. There is a need however for the playgroup to:

- update a number of safeguarding and child protection policies and the procedure for recording any allegations made against a member of staff.

9. Overall effectiveness

Loughshore Playgroup needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are:

- to improve further the outcomes for children, in particular, their mathematical knowledge and understanding and their investigative skills;
- to develop a shared and robust process of self-evaluation to improve the quality of the provision; and
- for the staff to develop a better understanding of the pre-school curriculum in order to meet more effectively the needs of all children and ensure progression in learning across all areas.

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 months.

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; 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 management¹:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

¹ And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

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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