

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Millington Nursery School,
Portadown, Co Armagh

Report of an Inspection in
January 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

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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 centres, 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 staff holding specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a discussion with the principal;
- a meeting with a representative from the board of governors;
- a meeting with a group of parents; and
- the opportunity for the parents, and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

The parental responses to the questionnaire indicate very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the educational and pastoral provision provided by the nursery school. In particular, the parents appreciate the friendly approachable staff who keep them well informed about the pre-school programme and their children's progress; the commitment of the staff to the care and wellbeing of the children; the stimulating learning environment; and the wide range of quality learning activities and experiences available to children throughout the year. The staff responses indicated a strong sense of team work and commitment towards meeting the needs of the children and their families.

2. Context

Millington Nursery School is located in close proximity to Millington Primary School in the centre of Portadown. All of the children attending the three full-time nursery classes are in their immediate pre-school year and come mainly from the local area. Twenty-four percent of the children currently enrolled have been identified as requiring additional support with their learning and development. The nursery operates an open plan system.

3. Focus of the 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	Outstanding
Achievements and Standards	Outstanding
Provision	Outstanding
Leadership and Management	Outstanding

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children settle very quickly on arrival to the nursery and are keen to explore and investigate the wide range of interesting activities available to them both indoors and outdoors. The children spend lengthy periods at self chosen activities and most will persevere with challenging tasks and ask for assistance if and when it is required. They display high levels of independence and self-esteem and readily engage with the staff to discuss their work and play and to talk about their personal experiences. The quality of most of the children's work is of a high standard.
- The children engage in very good imaginative role play which is often based on their own ideas. They show a good awareness of different character roles and happily act out scenarios with their peers. The children show a keen interest in books and often refer to the reference books incorporated into the play areas. A significant number of the children can recognise and attempt to write, or form letters, in their own name and identify numbers. They participate well in group sessions, demonstrate very good listening skills and show regard for the views and opinions of others and their environment.

6. Provision

- The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is presented to a very high standard and every opportunity is used effectively to promote language and learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The play materials, resources and equipment are presented in an attractive and imaginative way to arouse curiosity and to encourage the children to explore and investigate all areas of the nursery. ICT is used effectively to enhance further the children's learning experiences. All aspects of the pre-school curriculum are equally weighted and thoughtfully planned and presented in a challenging and progressive manner to meet the varying needs of the children. The thoughtful organisation of the day ensures that necessary routines are well established and transitions between activities and key times run smoothly.
- The quality of the staff interactions with the children are consistently of a very high standard. They engage readily with the children in their play and often act as role models prompting and encouraging extended responses from them and developing their thinking, language and social skills.

- The written planning is comprehensive and guides the staff very well in their work with the children. The staff gather appropriate information about the children's responses to the activities, their progress and their development and use the information to make adjustments to the planning to ensure that their individual needs and interests are very well catered for. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified at an early stage and appropriate support programmes are put in place 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 quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. A happy, friendly and caring ethos permeates the nursery and is based on mutual respect at all levels. The behaviour of the children is exemplary.

7. Leadership and management

- The principal is highly effective in her role and promotes a strong team spirit between all staff, governors and the wider school community. She is very well supported in her leadership role by the hard working and dedicated staff who all contribute to the high quality of the provision. The governors are supportive of the work of the staff and have a shared vision for the future development of the school. The school development planning process is well embedded and provides a sound basis for the strategic development of the nursery. Appropriate priorities for development have been identified. Effective links with parents, external agencies and the local community have been established for the benefit of the children.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the nursery school has comprehensive arrangements in place for the safeguarding of children. The arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Conclusion

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

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON MILLINGTON NURSERY SCHOOL

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Attending full-time	26	26	26
Attending part-time			
Under 3 years of age*			
With statement of special educational needs		1	
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	1	
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	2	1	1
At CoP stages 1 or 2**		4	2
With English as an additional language	6	6	6

* 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.	19%
Average attendance for the previous year.	90%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4¾ hours	-	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	2
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	3	3
Nursery Assistants (non-qualified)		
Special Needs Assistant		

Number of: ***	
Students	3
Trainees	

*** Total placements since September of current year

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