

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Park Community Playgroup,
Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in
March 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 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, staff and members of the management group to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Forty-seven percent of the parents responded to the questionnaire and five provided additional written comments. All of the returns from the questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with the work of the playgroup. The responses from staff questionnaires were positive.

2. Context

Park Community playgroup is located in purpose built accommodation within the Park Community Centre, Londonderry. At the time of the inspection, there were 21 children enrolled in the playgroup. The children come from a very wide catchment area. The pre-school programme is delivered through the High Scope methodology.

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

- The children are confident, well motivated and have a positive attitude to their learning. They are making very good progress in nearly all areas of the pre-school programme. The children show high levels of concentration and perseverance when engaging in their play activities and co-operate well with one another in purposeful and productive play. All of the children understand well the daily routines in the playgroup, and show increasing independence and a growing sense of responsibility.
- The children's oral language is developing well as they engage confidently with the staff in conversations about their play experiences. They show a great interest in, and enjoy browsing through, the many books on display for their use; they all listen attentively during story time. The children enjoy mark making; the majority can recognise, and they are beginning to write, their own names.
- The children are developing abilities to use various techniques to produce interesting pictures and models. They are provided with a wide range of materials which they are encouraged to explore freely; their paintings, drawings and model-making show close attention to detail and good control of tools.
- Most of the children have a very good understanding of early mathematical concepts, and show an awareness of, for example, time, shape, capacity, position and number.

6. Provision

- The staff have a very good understanding of the pre-school curriculum and provides effective learning opportunities for the children. The playroom is welcoming with a wide range of appropriate play activities to stimulate and enhance the children's learning. The daily routines are well-managed.
- The staff spend extended periods of time with groups and individuals, promoting the children's language and thinking and participating skilfully in the play. The very good involvement of all the staff in the children's play activities is a key strength of the playgroup.
- The staff plan regularly the programme in line with the High Scope methodology; the activities provide a range of stimulating and varied learning experiences for the children. The staff should continue to consolidate and refine their methods for planning. They need to ensure that the learning to be promoted in all areas of the curriculum is outlined, the play activities provide increased challenge and progression over the year and the information collated in the observations is used to inform future learning.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the provision of a healthy snack and the opportunities for energetic play.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader of the playgroup is an excellent role- model and is supported well by the other members of staff. She promotes a culture of continuous improvement. Working relationships are excellent and the staff work very effectively and collaboratively for the benefit of all the children. The early years specialist has provided the staff with very good support and guidance.
- The playgroup staff have developed very good and effective links with the parents. They seek their views, welcome them into the playroom and encourage them to take pride in their children's work.
- While the staff have made a useful start to evaluating aspects of their provision they should continue to work with their early years specialist to develop further the process of continuous self evaluation leading to improvement.
- 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 Department.

8. Conclusion

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

STATISTICAL INFORMATION PARK 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	19	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	19	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	19	
with a statement of special educational needs	0	
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	
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	187

** 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	3	
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	4	
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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