

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Primrose Hill Day Nursery,  
Ballyclare, County Antrim

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in  
May 2018



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



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## 1. Context

Primrose Hill Day Nursery offers part time funded pre-school places as part of its wider day care facility. The pre-school is situated in a rural location between Larne and Ballyclare. Since the last inspection there have been several changes in the staff including the appointment of a new leader and a new independent early year's specialist. At the time of the inspection the new leader had been in post for a few weeks.

|                                   |         |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Number of children:</b>        | Class 1 |
| Attending part-time               | 32      |
| Funded by Department of Education | 19      |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Average percentage attendance for the previous year. | 93% |
| Number of days open in previous school year          | 185 |

**Source:** data provided by the setting.

## 2. Views of parents and staff

No responses from parents were received to the confidential questionnaire. The three staff responses were positive about all aspects of the provision.

## 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

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>     | Address urgently the significant areas for improvement |
| <b>Outcomes for learners</b>     | Requires significant improvement                       |
| <b>Quality of provision</b>      | Requires significant improvement                       |
| <b>Leadership and management</b> | Requires urgent improvement                            |

## 5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are not making sufficient progress in their learning across all aspects of the pre-school curriculum.
- The children are responding well to the recent changes in routines and strategies to promote positive behaviour; they are independent in the daily routines and their behaviour is very good. They have a good level of interest in books and experimental writing and most of the children participate well during large group song and rhyme sessions.

- The children do not concentrate and persevere sufficiently at activities. Their curiosity, thinking skills, problem solving, creative and imaginative responses are underdeveloped for the time of year.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- There are important areas for improvement within all areas of the curriculum. The staff do not have a shared understanding of how to plan and implement effectively a high quality pre-school curriculum that meets the needs and interest of all of the children. They do not have dedicated time as a team or adequate specialist advice to develop and implement effectively their planning and assessment methods.
- The quality of the staff interaction is not of a consistently high enough quality to promote effectively the children's learning. The staff welcome the children warmly, are caring and respectful to them. In the best practice, they introduce key vocabulary, model the use of equipment and support well the children to follow the daily routines. In the less effective, a majority of the practice, there is an over emphasis on adult direction, insufficient awareness of the children who are not productively engaged and missed opportunities to promote language and learning throughout the session.
- The staff do not have a sufficient understanding of how to identify, plan and meet the needs of children with additional needs. The current Special Educational Needs policy does not include enough detail to guide the staff on the implementation of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.
- The staff have made some recent improvements in the daily timetable and resources to promote learning outdoors and enable the children to make independent choices within the playroom. This work needs to continue to ensure all areas of play are richly resourced with progressively challenging experiences that match the needs and interests of the children.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare does not impact positively enough on the learning and teaching, and outcomes in promoting the children's personal and social development.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management of the playgroup is not effective enough in working collaboratively to plan, implement and evaluate high quality pre-school education. The high turnover of staff within the current pre-school year and the lack of a suitably experienced early years specialist since the last inspection, has impacted negatively on the quality of the provision.
- The management need to support the new pre-school leader in establishing a stable pre-school team with a shared understanding of quality pre-school education by providing the necessary resources to support their development to bring about the necessary improvements.

- The staff communicate with the parents through a range of appropriate methods and have enhanced further their work with parents through their participation in the Big Bedtime Read funded by the Department of Education.
- While a current manager has led a number of recent improvements, the processes for self-evaluation and effective action planning to guide the improvements to be made are underdeveloped.

## **8. Safeguarding**

Based on the evidence at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children in Primrose Day Nursery Pre-school reflect broadly the guidance from the relevant Departments.

Areas for improvement are:

- the pre-school room leader needs to complete the planned child protection training;
- the risk assessments for outings require further detail;
- the policies for Special Education Needs, anti-bullying and behaviour need to be reviewed and updated in line with current guidance.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Primrose Hill Day Nursery pre-school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. ETI will monitor and report on the playgroups progress in addressing the need to:

- develop the skill and understanding of the staff team to provide high quality learning experiences in line with the pre-school curricular guidance; in particular the development of the children's language, concentration, creativity, imaginative and investigative play;
- improve the processes for planning and assessment and match the learning experiences with the needs and interests of the children;
- improve the quality of the staff interactions to promote the children's learning;
- improve the quality of the resources to support a rich and stimulating curriculum;
- update the policy for special educational needs and provide training for the special educational needs co-ordinator and staff to enable them to implement the policy;
- appoint an early years specialist with the necessary experience and skill to support the staff; and
- improve the skills and knowledge of the leadership and management to monitor and evaluate effectively quality pre-school education.

### 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 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 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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