

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Rainbow Pre-School,
Dromore, County Down

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in
October 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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1. Context

Rainbow Pre-School is located in a shared community building in the centre of Dromore, County Down. The pre-school uses a large hall within the building, along with part of the car park which is used for the outdoor programme. The staff pack away and store the resources at the conclusion of each session. The children attending the pre-school come from the town and surrounding area. Since the last inspection, a new leader has been appointed. At the time of the inspection, a temporary assistant was in post.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	18
Funded by Department of Education	18
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0

Number of days open in previous school year	185
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Source: data provided by the setting.

* On 1 July.

** 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 minority of parents responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were wholly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. The small number of written comments praised the caring and dedicated staff who provide a child-centred learning environment for all of the children. All of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire and their responses were wholly positive. The questionnaire responses were 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	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Quality of provision	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Good

5. Outcomes for learners

- All of the children settle quickly to play at the wide range of activities on offer. They show very good levels of independence; accessing resources for their play and self-managing the snack routine. A small number of children are not sufficiently aware of the rules within the setting. Overall, the children sustain good concentration outdoors but their concentration in the playroom is not as well developed.
- A small number of the children engage well in mark-making. During the inspection, there were examples of purposeful mark-making at the writing table, the construction area and home corner. Most of the children are interested in exploring books; they browse books in the library corner and refer to books as a natural part of their play.
- Most of the children demonstrate an early awareness of mathematical concepts as they weigh, measure, sort, count, and discuss shape as an integral part of their play.
- The children use confidently a range of tools and display dexterity with fine motor skills that are well-developed for the time of year. The children participate enthusiastically in music making and singing, but their interest in junk modelling and art activities is underdeveloped.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff engage positively with the children; however, there are too many missed opportunities for the staff to progress the children's learning. This is due, in part, to the large size of the playroom and the current layout which, although well resourced, is too spread out to promote effective interaction between the children and the staff. Currently, there are too many activities on offer across a large area which is impacting negatively on the collaborative play opportunities for the children. While there are clear rules in the setting, these need to be applied consistently by all members of staff.
- The organisation of the day provides a lengthy period of free play when the children are able to develop their interest in their chosen activities. Towards the end of the session, there are too many transitions. This results in the children moving needlessly across the playroom and back impacting on the effective use of time to promote the children's learning.
- Overall, the staff provide a broad and balanced curriculum with good opportunities for learning across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff have introduced more authentic and stimulating resources which interest the children and encourage experimentation and exploration. While the staff provide good opportunities for the children to make their own music and express their idea and feelings through role play, the children's creativity requires further development.
- The staff have worked well as a team to improve the long- and medium-term planning which better meets the individual needs of the children. Regular and relevant observations of the children are used to inform the short-term planning.

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on outcomes. There is a calm, friendly ethos and there are very good working relationships between the staff and the children. Consequently, the children are happy, well-settled and respectful towards the adults and each other.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff are reflective and have identified appropriate priorities for improvement through audits and self-evaluation. Recent improvement work on developing the planning has impacted positively in meeting better the individual needs of the children.
- The leader and staff appreciate the support of the early years' specialist (EYS). While the EYS has identified some appropriate areas for improvement, it will be important that the EYS works closely with the staff to effect improvement in the areas identified within the report.
- The management committee meets regularly and has a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities; they are very well-informed about priorities within the development plan.
- The staff share regular and appropriate information with the parents on the current theme and the learning focus through monthly newsletters. Very good use is made of the expertise of parents and visitors to the setting, along with planned trips, to enrich the children's learning.

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. However, the Rainbow Pre-School needs to: update the child protection policies and procedures to reflect current guidance; and, update the behaviour policy.

9. Overall effectiveness

Rainbow Pre-school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the children. There are areas for improvement that the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The areas for improvement are:

- to make more effective use of the large space to improve the learning experiences of the children;
- to improve the quality and consistency of the staff interactions; and
- to review aspects of the day, in particular the transitions, to ensure that all time is used more effectively for learning.

The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

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, including the management group; 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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