

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Randalstown Community  
Playgroup, Randalstown,  
County Antrim

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in  
October 2017



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

Randalstown Community Playgroup is situated in dedicated accommodation in the Neilsbrook Community Centre, Randalstown. The children have access to the community centre's hall for physical play and a small outdoor play area. Since the last inspection, two new members of staff have been appointed.

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending part-time	20
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	20
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**	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	83%
Number of days open in previous school year	188

**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

## 2. Views of parents and staff

A small number of the parents and most of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were very positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. The written comments commended the supportive leadership and management of the playgroup in taking account of the staff's views within the decision-making processes and the effective team approaches to meeting the children's individual needs.

## 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>	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Outstanding
<b>Quality of provision</b>	Outstanding
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Outstanding

## **5. Outcomes for learners**

- The children are settled and confident; they interact co-operatively for extended periods in purposeful and concentrated play. They are developing well their independence and self-management skills and respond positively to the high expectations of the staff and the regular daily routines. The children behave very well and are respectful towards one another and adults.
- The children browse and enjoy stories and fact books and are developing well their understanding of key mathematical concepts including number, measures and shape. They engage with curiosity in the carefully planned activities which reflect well their needs and interests. Their representational artwork and the interesting investigations they carry out help them to extend their understanding of the world around them. The children are developing well their motor skills through using the various authentic tools and equipment provided indoors and outdoors.
- The children enjoy sharing and talking about their work and achievements. They choose the materials and equipment they need independently. All of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, are making continuous progress in all aspects of the playgroup curriculum.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- Both indoors and outdoors, the staff provide an attractive, child-centred learning environment, making effective use of all the available space and resources to extend the children's learning experiences and foster their growing self-reliance.
- The staff use effectively their shared understanding and knowledge of how the children are developing and learning to inform the future planning; as a consequence, the planning takes ongoing account of, and is continuously responsive to, the children's needs and interests.
- The quality of the staff interactions with the children, in particular the effective use of questions to promote and extend the children's language and understanding, is a key strength in the provision. The staff model skilfully the appropriate use of mathematical language in context and develop meaningfully the children's interest in books and printed materials. They make effective use of incidental opportunities to extend the children's learning further.
- The children who require additional support are identified early; the staff take appropriate account of the recommendations of outside agencies in supporting the children. There is effective communication with the parents in relation to the children's individual needs and the progress they are making.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on all aspects of the children's learning and well-being. The child-centred ethos and positive working relationships at all levels create a positive and nurturing learning environment for the children.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- There is an effective team approach within the playgroup which makes effective use of the staff's complementary skills. The dedicated leader shares a clear vision for the provision based on relevant research and knowledge of how young children learn. She is supported very well by the skilful staff team and management committee in all areas of the life and work of the playgroup.
- The staff's approaches to self-evaluation and their shared reflections lead to continuous improvement in all areas of the playgroup's provision in the best interests of the children.
- The playgroup employs an independent early years specialist to support its work; the positive and productive working relationships bring about continuous improvement in the provision for the children.
- There are effective working links and positive communication with the parents who are very supportive of the work of the playgroup.

## **8. Safeguarding**

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the relevant Departments.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Randalstown Community Playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

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 chairperson of 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 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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