

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Ravenscroft Nursery School,
Belfast

Controlled Nursery School

Report of an Inspection in
April 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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1. Context

Ravenscroft Nursery School is situated in East Belfast. The majority of the children attending the nursery come from the local area. Since the last inspection a new principal has been appointed; a temporary teacher is currently employed in the school. The nursery school has been awarded its fourth Eco Flag and has also been recognised as a Makaton Friendly School.

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	25	26
Attending part-time	0	#
Funded by Department of Education	25	26
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	#
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	9	8
With English as an additional language	6	5
Number of children who transferred from a Sure Start 2 year old programme	#	#
Number of children who participated in other Sure Start services	#	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	90%
Number of days open in previous school year	190

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

Fifty percent of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The parental responses were wholly positive and indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the nursery school. In particular the parents commented on: the wide range of learning experiences presented to the children; the caring, committed and supportive staff; and the variety of opportunities to become involved in their children's learning and contribute to the community. The staff responses were mainly positive and the written comments highlighted the support received from the parents and governors. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main findings and comments emerging from the questionnaires.

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	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
Quality of provision	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are very well settled and are making excellent progress across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. All of the children, including those with specific needs, engage enthusiastically in sustained, purposeful play throughout the day. They make independent choices for play, access confidently the resources they need and interact very well with each other and the adults. The children's behaviour is exemplary; they respond positively to the routines of the day and transition smoothly between activities both indoors and outdoors.
- The children have a very good understanding of early mathematical language and concepts. The majority of the children are able to count orally and use specific language associated with shape and space and measure. Most of the children are developing a very good understanding of one to one correspondence and sequencing.
- All of the children listen attentively, displaying concentration and interest during whole-class story time and music sessions. Almost all of the children communicate effectively with each other and the adults in the room. They share freely their ideas and thoughts, display interest in books and early marking and a minority of children are able to write their own names. The children engage actively in role play, participate eagerly in musical activities and produce very detailed creative drawings and paintings.
- A particular strength is the children's interest in their world around them. They are naturally curious about their environment, engage enthusiastically with the wide range of opportunities presented to them and use their senses to explore and investigate the indoor and outdoor play areas. They are developing a respect for, and knowledge of, living things through looking after tadpoles, butterflies and planting and attending to the vegetables and flowers.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff provide a richly resourced, well-structured and organised learning environment for the children, including an exceptionally wide range of natural and authentic resources. The quality of the outdoor provision is a particular strength and the children are free to explore and investigate their environment in a safe and secure way.
- The interactions between the staff and the children are of a consistently high quality, they promote the children's self-esteem and confidence and encourage the development of resilience and problem-solving skills.

- The comprehensive planning, which includes a clear link to cross-curricular aspects, is detailed and guides very well the work of the staff across of all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Regular, focussed and incidental observations of the children's learning are undertaken and used effectively to inform future actions and to monitor and support the development of the children's skills. The children who have additional learning needs are supported very effectively within the class and benefit from small-group sessions, delivered by additional staff members, which focus on language development.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the nursery school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning and teaching, and outcomes. There is an inclusive, welcoming environment within the nursery and the implementation of a school based programme is supporting the development of the children's confidence and resilience.

7. Leadership and management

- The outstanding leadership is characterised by the shared commitment of the principal, governors and all staff to provide high quality learning opportunities for all of the children. There is a systematic approach to development planning and self-evaluation which is informed by regular and meaningful consultation with staff, parents and governors. The comprehensive school development plan includes clear priorities and opportunities for continuous professional development of staff in order to support the further development of the nursery.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The board of governors are very well informed, committed and supportive of the nursery's work.
- Parents are encouraged to become actively involved with the nursery. The online communication, detailed monthly newsletters and regular meetings inform parents of the life and work of the nursery. In addition, a wide range of comprehensive programmes are made available for parents to support their children, through for example, the Getting Ready to Learn programme.
- Extensive community links exist and the nursery school is a member of both the East Belfast Partnership and the Early Years Network steering group. The strong link with the local Sure Start centre has benefitted the children, ensuring necessary information is shared prior to transition and very effective links exist with the local primary schools to which the children transfer.

8. Safeguarding

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the Department of Education

9. Overall effectiveness

Ravenscroft Nursery School has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The ETI will monitor how the nursery school 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; 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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