

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Scotwell House Playgroup, Armagh

Private Day Nursery DE Ref No (5AA-0190)

Report of an Inspection in January 2019



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

Scotwell House is a privately owned childcare facility situated in Armagh. The day nursery operates a pre-school playgroup with two classes. Since the last inspection in 2014 a new member of staff has been appointed and one assistant has moved into the playgroup from a different role within the day nursery.

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending part-time	26	4
Under 3 years of age*	0	8
Funded by Department of Education	26	4
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
At COP stages 1 or 2**	1	0
With English as an additional language	6	2

Average percentage attendance for the previous year	90
Number of days open in previous school year	185

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 the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. Most of the parental responses were positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. The staff responses were all positive about all areas. There were no written comments from the parents or staff. The questionnaire responses were shared with the leader and the proprietor.

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	Very good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Outcomes for learners

- All of the children, including those who require support with aspects of their learning, are making very good progress across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The children are well-settled and engage purposefully with their chosen activities. The children have good levels of independence as they: follow confidently the routines of the setting; approach the adults for support when necessary; and, access the resources they need to extend and enhance their play.
- The children are well-behaved and the majority of them are beginning to engage in collaborative play. They listen attentively during the group story time, join well in the rhymes and songs and enjoy browsing in books. The children can label their own work and a minority engage in purposeful mark making; their representational drawings are developing well. The children have a good interest in the world around us and engage in discussions with the adults about what plants and seeds need to grow.
- The children have very good fine motor skills observed as they serve their own snack, peg clothes on a line and cut vegetables in the home corner. Their gross motor skills are also developing well as they: used ribbons on sticks effectively to make circles; kicked footballs accurately; completed an obstacle course; and, operated ride on vehicle.
- Most of the children understand some early mathematical concepts including aspects of number, measures and shape. During the inspection, a small number of children engaged in counting and matching. Their ability to problem-solve independently is not developed sufficiently.

6. Quality of provision

- Both of the playrooms are well-organised to provide distinct areas of play. The staff have created a bright, welcoming environment which provides good and very good opportunities for learning across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- The staff observe the children regularly and use the evaluations of the children's learning to inform the activities and resources outlined in the short-term planning. The planning for both indoor and outdoor play does not identify effectively enough both the intended learning and the role of the adult in supporting progression and the differentiation for the underage children.
- The staff interactions with the children are of a consistently good quality. The engage with the children pastorally and are effective in promoting enjoyment and curiosity in learning. On a small number of occasions the staff ask too many questions and there were missed opportunities to allow the children time to think and problem-solve independently.
- The children who have additional learning needs are identified early and the staff work effectively with both the parents and external agencies to provide appropriate support. The targets and strategies on the individual education plans are not outlined clearly enough and the staff do not make sufficient use of the observations of the identified children to monitor their progress.

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning and teaching, and the outcomes for the children. The consistent use of positive behaviour strategies by the staff has resulted in the children being well-behaved and confident in the setting.

7. Leadership and management

- The leaders and staff work well collaboratively as a team and are supported well by the proprietor. They have a shared vision to provide high quality learning experiences for all of the children. The staff value the importance of ongoing professional development opportunities through accredited courses and qualifications.
- The staff have made good use of a range of self-evaluation strategies, including baseline audits and a self-evaluation tool to identify appropriate areas for improvement. There is evidence of the impact of the ongoing focus on developing the outdoor area which has resulted in an engaging learning environment with good opportunities for the children across the six areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff have identified the need to more formally evaluate the impact of the actions to promote improvement.
- The playgroup has had very good ongoing support from the early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation.
- The further development of links with the parents and the feeder primary schools is a current priority. The parents are kept informed about the work of the playgroup by the monthly newsletters and the playgroup has good links with one of the local primary schools. The range of visitors to the setting enhances the children's learning experiences.

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, Scotwell House Playgroup needs to:
 - update its policies on Child Protection, Positive Behaviour and Anti-bullying to reflect current guidance.

9. Overall effectiveness

Scotwell House Playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the children.

There is an area for improvement that the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area for improvement is:

- to develop the planning for indoor and outdoor play and identify more clearly both the intended learning and the role of the adult in supporting progression for all children.

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 proprietor; 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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