

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Slievegallion Pre-school,  
Magherafelt, County  
Londonderry

Report of an inspection in  
November 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



## Quantitative terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on 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 nursery school / playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school / playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school /playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school/ playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school/ playgroup needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's/ playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The nursery school / playgroup needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's / playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

## Contents

Section	Page
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Focus of inspection	1
3. Context	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	1
5. Achievements and standards	2
6. Provision for learning	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Overall effectiveness	3
Appendix	

## 1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school settings, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#).

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.

Almost half of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaires. The parental responses indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the quality of the provision being provided. Parents report that they value the work of the staff, the child-led approach to learning and the significant progress their children are making. The staff responses were wholly positive; they indicate confidence in the leadership and a very strong sense of teamwork at all levels.

## 2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children<sup>1</sup>, the purpose of inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to evaluate the:

- children's achievements and standards;
- quality of provision for learning; and
- quality of leadership and management.

## 3. Context

Pre-school Centre is accommodated in a mobile unit situated in an attractive rural location on the foothills of Slieve Gallion, near Magherafelt. The children who attend come from a wide catchment area.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Outstanding
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of a Day Nursery this refers only to the DE-funded pre-school provision.

## **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children have very positive attitudes toward their learning; they sustain high levels of concentration and purposeful engagement at activities throughout the session. They are very independent in the daily routines and have excellent attention and listening in skills.
- The children converse maturely with one another and the staff as they develop their own creative and imaginative ideas. They enjoy listening to and recreating stories through their role play. They participate very well in music sessions which include a wide repertoire of songs and use of rhyme and rhythm with musical instruments.
- Most of the children have a well developed understanding of early mathematical concepts and language; they count, make comparisons, follow visual prompts, sort materials and make patterns as a natural part of their play and during the daily routines.
- There is a high level of exploratory play as the children use their senses to investigate and discuss the wide range of natural materials available in the playroom. They select and use a range of tools and art processes with confidence and independence; a majority are beginning to make simple representations of people and objects in their pictures and models. The children are progressing well in their physical development through the regular use of equipment and activities to promote the development of their fine and gross motor skills.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The playroom is organised and resourced thoughtfully and skilfully to provide an excellent language-rich learning environment. The children's achievements and their responses to activities are very well documented and displayed around the playroom, focusing on the process of learning. The high quality of the staff interaction with the children to promote learning is an effective strength in the centre. The staff listen to the children's own ideas, building on them to extend the children's learning and language consistently through the session.
- The staff plan and implement a rich, well-resourced pre-school programme with very good and excellent opportunities for learning across all aspects of the pre-school curriculum. The staff gather and collate a range of relevant assessment evidence and use this information for: the early identification of needs; to plan to address the children's individual interests and to keep parents informed of their child's progress. The use of the information on the children's stages of development is not used consistently enough to ensure a close match between the resources used and the full range of ability shown by all of the children. On the day of the inspection the weather and ground conditions restricted access by the children to the full learning potential of the outdoor area. The staff and committee plan to develop further safe access to enable the outdoors area to be fully used.

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in this playgroup is outstanding. There is a very, caring, respectful and inclusive ethos in which each child is valued and well supported. There are very effective working relationships among the staff; the children's social skills and behaviour are excellent.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The pre-school is managed and led very effectively. The staff are all clear about their roles and responsibilities and all contribute to the high quality provision. There is evidence of ongoing reflection and improvement informed by consultation with parents, children and feeder primary schools; this information is used well to inform priority areas for development. The staff have attended a range of staff development and training provisions enabling them to engage in professional exchange and to share practice with other settings. The guidance provided by the early years specialist on action planning is not providing a clear enough link between staff development, key priorities and outcomes for the children.
- The pre-school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

Slievegallion Pre-school Centre has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON SLIEVEGALLION PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE

1. Details of children

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending part-time	23
Funded by Department of Education	23
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	

\* On 1 July.

\*\* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average attendance for the previous year.	96%
Number of days open in previous school year	186

2. Duration of sessions

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
	9:00-11:30	

3. Details of staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	5	
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	5	

**Source:** data provided by the nursery school / playgroup.

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