

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St John the Baptist Nursery School,  
Portadown, County Armagh

Maintained Nursery

Report of an Inspection in  
June 2018



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

St John the Baptist Nursery School is located in purpose-built accommodation on the Garvaghy Road in Portadown. The nursery operates two full-time funded sessions and almost all of the children come from the local area. The nursery has achieved two Eco-flags and was presented with a Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) gold award for their work to develop the children's interest in garden birds. Since the last inspection, the school has also been presented with a Trocaire award recognising their work to promote the children's understanding of life in under-developed countries.

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>
Attending full-time	25	25
Funded by Department of Education	25	25
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**	#	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#	#
With English as an additional language	#	9

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 parents responded to the confidential questionnaire; almost all of the responses were positive. In particular, the parents' written comments praised highly: the resources and happy environment; the pastoral care; the support provided to those who require assistance with their learning; and, the effective links established with the parents to ensure a seamless transition into year one. There were no staff responses to the confidential questionnaire.

## 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

- All of the children, including those who require assistance with their learning, are settled and follow well the routines of the day. They engage purposefully in their learning and achieve very well across all areas of learning within the pre-school curriculum. The children interact effectively with each other and, if required, can request support from adults using appropriate vocabulary to express their needs or ideas. They listen attentively at story time, participate enthusiastically in songs and are imaginative during various role play scenarios.
- The children's personal, social and emotional skills are highly developed; they make independent choices for play and snack and work collaboratively to create, explore and investigate using the wide range of authentic and natural resources.
- The children's mark making skills are a particular strength; many are able to write their own name to label their work, which is displayed throughout both playrooms. They take great pride in their artwork and their representational drawings are highly developed. The children have a very good understanding of early mathematical language and concepts; most count, sort, measure and make comparisons accurately throughout their play.
- The children are particularly engaged in learning that relates to the world around them. They use the well-considered indoor and outdoor resources very effectively to gain a respect for, and knowledge of, living things.
- The children have highly developed fine and gross motor skills. All of the children are using a tripod grasp and are able to use a range of tools to chop and slice vegetables. They traverse the climbing frame and ride on balance bikes confidently during participation in a range of energetic play activities.
- The children who are identified as having additional needs are making very good progress.

#### 6. Quality of provision

- The staff provide a well-structured and organised learning environment for the children and excellent indoor and outdoor opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The nursery is very attractively presented and enhanced by relevant photographs and displays of the children's own work. The well-managed materials promote independence and allow the children to steer and develop their own learning.

- The outdoor area is thoughtfully planned to ensure a wide and rich range of learning across the curriculum with particularly good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills, as well as explore, learn about and care for the world around them. Building on the children's natural curiosity, the staff provide well-planned activities that further encourage the children to predict, experiment and problem solve.
- The staff's interactions with the children are of a consistently high quality. Communication with the children is engaging, positive and purposeful and promotes the children's self-esteem, confidence, language and problem-solving skills. The transitions from indoor to outdoor play and from the playrooms into snack and lunch, are seamless and maximise the learning opportunities for the children.
- The long-, medium- and short-term planning provides a framework for an appropriately broad and balanced pre-school curriculum and provides detailed direction for all adults working with the children. The children's learning is rigorously monitored with an effective and structured system in place for observing, assessing and recording the children's progress. The staff use these observations to tailor the short-term planning to meet the individual needs. The learning opportunities provided by the staff are enhanced further by visits to relevant places of interest and by very regular visitors, including parents and grandparents, with expertise from the local community.
- The children who require additional support with their learning are identified early through information gathered from parents, staff observations and other professionals. Individual education plans, which outline appropriately the strengths of the children, are reviewed regularly with the parents and include pertinent strategies to support their progress.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to the care and welfare of the children impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. The staff value the children's contributions and consistently promote independent participation in all activities.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management of the nursery promote teamwork and a shared vision for providing high quality care and education. The staff in each playroom work collaboratively and have identified appropriate areas for further development within the setting. The nursery's approach to development planning and self-evaluation is informed by staff and parent consultation; self-evaluation is reflective and based on a culture of continuous improvement in the best interests of every child.
- 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 fully aware of their responsibility as a governing body; they sensitively exercise the challenge function and support the staff very well in all aspects of their work.

- Parents' views and contributions are valued; they are informed regularly about both the life and work of the nursery and of their child's progress. The parents have a wide range of opportunities to be involved in their child's learning. Through the Getting Ready to Learn programme, the staff have worked closely with parents to support them in developing their children's fine motor skills. The well-developed partnership between home and school has impacted significantly on the outcomes of the children.
- Opportunities accessed via the extended schools programme and the valuable link with the local Sure Start provision, has had a very positive impact on the progression of the children's learning and in providing essential support for specific families. Close and long-established links with staff from local primary schools help the children to make smooth transitions into their next stage of education.

## **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**

St John the Baptist 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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