

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Kieran's Nursery School,
Belfast

Catholic maintained

Report of an Inspection in
April 2017



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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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

St Kieran's is a maintained nursery school which operates two full-time classes and is located in purpose-built accommodation in the Poleglass area of Belfast.

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	26
Under 3 years of age*	#	#
Funded by Department of Education	26	26
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**	#	0
With English as an additional language	#	0

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	63
Average attendance for the previous year.	89%
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

2. Views of parents and staff

A minority of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. All of the responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the nursery. The parents commented on: the professional, dedicated and approachable staff; and the children's positive experiences in the nursery.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, 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	Very good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Very good

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- Almost all of the children are well settled, well behaved and engage in sustained, purposeful play. They interact well with each other, with staff and with visitors and take pride in their work and achievements.
- The children are interested in books and listen attentively during small-group and whole-class story sessions. Many children access books independently during play and enjoy sharing them with their peers. They produce detailed representational artwork, about which they talk confidently. Their early mark-making is of a high standard. The children are developing well their fine motor skills; selecting and using a wide range of tools and equipment to cut, chop and thread. They have a very good understanding of key mathematical concepts and the language associated with early number, measures and shape. Outdoors, the children participate in a range of physical, energetic play, developing well their gross motor skills of climbing, digging and pedalling.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff have created a well-resourced, attractive learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. There are missed opportunities during the snack routine to maximise learning and promote further the children's independence and self-management skills. The transitions and routines are well-embedded.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is of a consistently high standard. The staff model play effectively and engage skilfully with the children, supporting and extending their learning as appropriate.
- The staff have identified appropriately the need to: formalise their approach to evaluating learning in the short-term in order to improve provision more immediately; and review the cycle of observation, recording and assessment in order to link observations and assessments more explicitly to planning and to improve planning for individual children.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are included fully in all aspects of the nursery provision. The staff know the children very well and understand and respond skilfully and sensitively to their needs, strengths and interests. There are meaningful links with parents and other professionals and agencies to support the children.
- The high quality of care and welfare benefits the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the children. There is an inclusive, welcoming and respectful ethos in the nursery in which all children and staff are valued.

7. Leadership and management

- The high quality of leadership and management in the nursery is characterised by the excellent teamwork and shared commitment of the principal, governors and all staff to provide high quality learning opportunities for all of the children.

- The board of governors are fully aware of their responsibility as a governing body and support the staff very well in their work. 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.
- There is a well-established system of self-evaluation to which all staff contribute, and which leads to improvements in the provision. The comprehensive school development plan has been informed by meaningful consultation and self-evaluation and is supported by effective action plans.
- There are very effective links with parents, the local community, other pre-school providers, the adjoining primary school, and other professionals and agencies, which provide support for the children and their parents during their pre-school year and with their transition to primary school.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

CONCLUSION

8. Overall effectiveness

St Kieran's 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.

Information on sessions and staff

Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
9am-1.30pm	-	-

Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	3	3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	1	3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	2	0
New appointments within the previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: *	
Students	1
Trainees	0

Source: data provided by the setting.

* Total placements since September of current year

Inspection method and evidence base

The effective practice and self-evaluation questions which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school settings, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *The Pre-school Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework* at: <https://www.eti.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 management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Reporting 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.

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