

# Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



## St Martin's Nursery School, Belfast

Maintained nursery school DE Ref No (113-6106)

Report of an Inspection in February 2019



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



# CONTENTS

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Context	1
2. Views of parents and staff	1
3. Focus of the inspection	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	1
5. Outcomes for learners	2
6. Quality of provision	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Safeguarding	3
9. Overall effectiveness	3

## **Appendices**

- A. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- B. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

## 1. Context

St Martin's Nursery is located within the grounds of Holy Trinity Primary School in west Belfast and occupies a purpose-built facility with access to a large outdoor play area. All of the children attending come from the local and surrounding area. Since the last inspection a new principal has been appointed. At the time of the inspection a substitute teacher was in post.

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>
Attending full-time	26	26
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 1 or 2**	#	#
With English as an additional language	#	#

Average attendance for the previous year.	98
Number of days open in previous school year	189

**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 and staff completed the confidential questionnaire; all of the responses were extremely positive. The parental written comments highlighted in particular: the welcoming atmosphere; the helpful, kind and caring staff; the support extended to parents; and the progress their child has made during the year. A summary of the responses from the questionnaires has been shared with the principal and chair of the board of governors.

## 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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Outstanding
<b>Provision for learning</b>	Outstanding
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Outstanding

## **5. Outcomes for learners**

- Almost all of the children are making very good progress across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The children's personal, social and emotional skills are very well developed. They have high levels of independence, make free choices in their play, engage in long periods of sustained, collaborative learning and access and share resources easily. The children are enthusiastic about their learning and exhibit exemplary manners and behaviour.
- All of the children engage actively in, and respond enthusiastically to, the story telling sessions and the opportunities to respond to planned and incidental music. They produce detailed representational artwork and many show an interest in early mark making. They use mathematical language appropriately, particularly in relation to number, counting and measure and engage readily in the wide range of mathematical learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors.
- The children are particularly engaged in learning that relates to the world around them. They have high levels of curiosity for, and knowledge of, living things and use the extensive indoor and outdoor resources, including technical equipment, to explore their environment. They have highly developed fine and gross motor skills and participate confidently in a wide range of physical and energetic play.
- Those children who require support with aspects of their learning are very well integrated into the group, are making the expected progress and benefit from the additional support provided.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- The staff have created a welcoming, inclusive learning environment which is enhanced by photographs and displays of the children's work. The well organised classroom and extensive outdoor areas provide a wide range of learning opportunities across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Transitions throughout the day and across areas of play are very smooth and maximise learning opportunities for the children.
- The comprehensive planning identifies clearly the learning potential of the organised activities and considers the individual needs and interests of all the children. The extensive opportunities for the development of World Around Us have enhanced the children's interest in, and enthusiasm for, their environment. The staff use effectively the regular, focussed and incidental observations of the children's learning to inform future actions and to monitor and support the development of the children's skills. The learning opportunities provided by the staff are enhanced further by visits to relevant places of interest and by very regular visitors, which include a music therapist.
- The staff's interactions with the children are of a consistently high quality. They are skilful in promoting and sustaining learning, model and use complex and descriptive vocabulary. The staff encourage well the children's sustained engagement in the activities; building effectively on the children's personal interests and experiences.

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the nursery's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on their learning and development. The monthly focus on emotional health has enhanced the children's development and understanding of their own and others' emotions and feelings.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management of the nursery is outstanding. At all levels there is a clear focus on child-centred learning and community engagement to meet the needs of the children and their families. The reflective and collegial approach by all staff has resulted in a highly effective developmental process which is underpinned by extensive, rigorous self-evaluation and contributions by parents and governors. The continuous professional development of the team is planned for strategically. Staff participation in the training provided in-house and via local clusters and external providers, has enhanced their skillset and supports the continuous 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 governors are fully committed to the nursery and take a very active role in the life of the school. They have a clear understanding of the development of the child and the importance of engaging the whole family to promote this growth.
- There is a wide range of opportunities for parents to become actively involved in the nursery, through for example, charitable fundraising and the Getting Ready to Learn programme. Regular communication via detailed newsletters and social media keeps families informed of the life and work of the nursery. In addition, parents accept readily the wide variety of support, including bespoke guidance material and an extensive range of workshops, provided by the parent worker. There are very regular links with the local primary schools which support the smooth transition of the children to year 1.

## **8. Safeguarding**

During the inspection, the nursery provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding the children reflect the guidance from the Department of Education.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

St Martin'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 sustains improvement.

### 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;
- a meeting with staff;
- a meeting with the chair of governors; 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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management<sup>1</sup>:

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 impacts positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

<sup>1</sup> 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.



© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2019

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)