

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



St Oliver Plunkett Pre-School, Belfast

Voluntary Pre-School DE Ref No (1BB-0322)

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

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1. Context

St Oliver Plunkett Pre-school is located in West Belfast and occupies a purpose built facility in the grounds of St Oliver Plunkett Primary School. All of the children attending the pre-school come from the local area.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	24
Funded by Department of Education	24

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	95
Number of days open in previous school year	183

Source: data provided by the setting.

- * 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 questionnaire. All of the responses were wholly positive. The questionnaire responses were shared with the leader and a representative from the management committee.

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	Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Outcomes for learners

- The personal, social and emotional skills of the children are highly developed. All of the children, including those who require additional support with their learning: are very well settled; familiar with daily routines; engage in sustained and collaborative play; able to self-register; share resources readily; and, assist at tidy-up time.

- Almost all of the children are achieving good standards across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum. They have a good understanding of early mathematical concepts and use appropriate mathematical language, particularly in number. Whilst a minority of the children display an interest in the world around them, their creative and investigative play is underdeveloped.
- All of the children are attentive during the group story and all contribute enthusiastically to the opportunity to make music and engage in incidental rhyme and song sessions. A minority of the children display an interest in, and access independently the wide range of books available in the playroom. Their representational artwork, which is displayed and celebrated in the playroom, is of a good standard and a minority of the children engage in early mark-making opportunities.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff model well and promote the development of the children's oral language. They are consistent in their use of positive behaviour strategies and approaches and as a result the children's behaviour is exemplary. Whilst the quality of the interactions between the staff and the children in the playroom is consistently good, the majority of interactions during outdoor play are supervisory in nature. There are insufficient opportunities to challenge and promote effectively the children's creativity, thinking and problem-solving skills, in particular, during outdoor play.
- Planning is in place across all areas of the pre-school curriculum and guides well the learning, teaching and assessment. There is a system in place for recording observations of the children's learning; however the quality of the information recorded is variable and the observations are not used effectively to inform future planning and ensure the needs of all children are met.
- 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 outcomes. The positive working relationships create an atmosphere which is relaxed and encouraging and supports the children's well-being.

7. Leadership and management

- The playgroup's approach to development planning and self-evaluation is underdeveloped. Although appropriate priorities have been identified and agreed, insufficient evidence is being gathered to monitor and evaluate effectively the impact of the actions to promote improvement in the outcomes for the children or the quality of the provision.
- There is a positive team approach to all aspects of the work of the playgroup. A new committee has been formed which is supporting the staff in identifying areas for improvement and developing further the provision in the pre-school. An early years specialist, who has been working with the group for two years, provides good support to the staff.

- Parents are provided with helpful induction packs and are kept informed about the life and work of the playgroup through monthly newsletters. Good links exist with the primary school to which the majority of children transfer. The parents are involved in fundraising initiatives and also contribute to the children's learning experiences through, for example, reading with them as part of the Getting Ready to Learn initiative.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the relevant Departments.

9. Overall effectiveness

St Oliver Plunkett Pre-school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the children.

There are areas for improvement that the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The areas for improvement are to develop further:

- the self-evaluation and development planning process; and
- the outdoor area to ensure the children's full potential is realised and in particular the development of their creativity and their investigative and problem solving skills.

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 management group; 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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