

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Peter's Playgroup,  
Collegelands, Moy, Co Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in  
October 2014

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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

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CSE



## 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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

<b>DESCRIPTOR</b>
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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## 1. Inspection method and evidence base

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

Inspectors observed teaching and learning through play, the children's achievements and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, and held formal and informal discussions with children, and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a discussion with the staff;
- a meeting with those involved with leadership and management; and
- the opportunity for the parents, staff and members of the management group to complete a confidential questionnaire.

The parents and the staff who responded to the questionnaire were wholly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. They commented on the caring and valuable contribution made to the children's education by the staff.

## 2. Context

St Peter's Playgroup is situated in purpose built accommodation in the grounds of St Peter's Primary School located in Collegelands, on the outskirts of Moy village. The applications for pre-school places exceed the available places. Most of the staff is in post since the last inspection in 2008. A newly appointed member of staff was not in post on the day of the inspection and a volunteer member of staff provided substitute cover.

## 3. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

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

## 4. Overall findings

<b>Overall Performance Level</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>Achievements and Standards</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>Provision</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

## **Key findings of the inspection**

### **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children are welcomed on arrival and appear happy as they independently self-register and hang up their coats. They are secure in the routines of the day such as snack and during transitions. The children are effectively developing positive attitudes to learning and their play varies from that which is collaborative to solitary. Almost all of the children sustain concentrated play and are well-behaved. The children are effectively developing social skills and are forming friendships.
- There is a wide variation in the children's use of language and communication skills. The children are often engaged in conversation and their competence in language varies from listening and understanding to turn-taking in conversational language using a rich vocabulary. A small number of the children are delayed in the production of language and require specific programmes to meet their language development needs. The children engage well in oral story-telling using puppets. When given the opportunity the children listen attentively to stories and enjoy books. The children's early mark making and writing is developing at an appropriate pace. Most of the children are able to express their ideas through representational drawings and paintings and these are mounted in colourful displays around the playgroup.
- The quality of the children's mathematical language and the development of their associated mathematical concepts are very well-developed for this time of year. The children are effectively developing their understanding of positional language, ordering, measurement, shape, size and number through play. In addition the children enjoy early problem-solving challenges during play.
- The children's physical fine motor skills are mainly being developed through cutting, painting and drawing using an appropriate range of tools. The children need further opportunities to develop their gross motor skills and their scientific skills.

### **6. Provision**

- The staff have created a stimulating and attractive learning environment. There is a supportive and caring family ethos in the playgroup based on excellent relationships at all levels. The children turn readily to the staff for support and are productively engaged throughout the day in meaningful play-based learning experiences.
- The daily timetable is well organised to provide a good balance of free play and activities organised by the staff and is flexible to respond to the interests of the children. The snack and transitions between the activities are developed effectively to provide very good learning opportunities across the curriculum.
- The quality of the interaction between all of the staff and the children is consistently of a good to very good standard. The staff listen and respond to the children's ideas and ask questions which enable the children to think and develop their vocabulary. All of the staff effectively promote sustained involvement in play and the children are well-settled and motivated to learn at the beginning of the year. The staff appropriately engage the children in safe play and promote effectively an understanding and awareness of keeping safe messages and strategies.

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is outstanding. The staff treat the children with care and respect and provide a secure and stimulating environment that helps the children to grow in confidence and to develop their awareness of others.
- The staff plan together and evaluate the quality of the provision. They know the children very well and collate useful assessments of their progress. The staff need to be more confident in their own professional judgements of the children's progress and needs and record these and use the information to inform the planning. The staff maintain excellent links with the parents and the local primary school to which most children progress.
- The provision for the children with additional needs is at an early stage of development given the time of the year. While the staff are embedding well a range of strategies gained through their participation in the Early Years Special Educational Needs Capacity Building pilot, there is a need to ensure that they identify early the language and personal needs of a small number of the children and develop further their individual education programmes. The staff have appropriately identified the need to work in pre-school clusters to ensure that they develop further their capacity to identify developmental needs and to implement strategies as early as possible to address barriers to learning.
- The playgroup gives good attention to healthy eating and there are plans to extend further the provision for physical activity.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The collegial team approach to self-evaluation and the effective gathering of evidence to identify areas for improvement is an important feature of the planning for improvement process. The leader is an excellent role-model in the playroom and administrator for the playgroup. She is well-supported by the staff in all aspects and ensures that policies and procedures which guide the development work are kept under review and shared with the parents and the management group. Staff training needs are identified and there are effective ongoing clustering arrangements with other pre-school settings established to share best practice.
- The parents are fully involved in the life and work of the playgroup. Most of the children transfer to the local primary school and relevant information about the children's progress is provided to the year one teacher. The productive links with the primary school staff support effective transitional arrangements from pre-school to year one.
- The early years specialist (EYS) from the early years organisation (EYO) provides effective support to develop the provision. The EYS cluster support is effectively building the capacity of the staff in the playgroup sector to sustain ongoing improvement. The staff have benefitted from the Early Years Special Educational Needs Capacity Building pilot and they are developing arrangements to sustain and embed this training within the pre-school programme.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

## **8. Conclusion**

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is very good. The playgroup is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self improvement.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
attending the pre-school setting	26	-
In their immediate pre-school year	26	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	26	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	*	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	*	-
with English as an additional language	*	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
<b>Attendance:</b>		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	93%	-

\* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

\*\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff, including leader	4	
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	
New appointments within previous 12 months	1	

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	0
Trainees	1

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

<b>Duration of morning session</b>	<b>Duration of afternoon session</b>	<b>Number of days open in previous year</b>
3 hours	-	189

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