

# Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Sugar and Spice Early Years Centre, Drumquin, County Tyrone

Voluntary playgroup DE Ref No: 2AB-0347

Report of an Inspection in November 2019



Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



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## 1. Context

Sugar and Spice Early Years Centre is located within the Drumquin Enterprise Centre. There is a playroom and an outdoor area which includes a garden. The children attending the playgroup come from the local catchment area. The pre-school is engaged in a shared education cross-community partnership with a local playgroup through the Sharing from the Start Programme.

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending part-time	26
Funded by Department of Education	26
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	14

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2	100%
Average percentage attendance for the previous year	93%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

**Source:** data provided by the setting.

# fewer than 5

## 2. Views of parents and staff

Most of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses were extremely positive about the life and work of the playgroup. In written comments, the parents highlighted the friendly, caring staff and their pastoral care of the children. The written comments from the staff highlighted their appreciation of the links between the pre-school, parents and local community, and the strong collegial teamwork. A summary of the questionnaire responses were shared with the leadership 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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Outstanding
<b>Quality of provision</b>	Good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Very good

## **5. Outcomes for learners**

- All of the children have very positive attitudes and dispositions for learning, are attaining high standards and making progress across every aspect of the pre-school curriculum. They settle quickly to their self-chosen activities and engage purposefully in play for sustained periods of time across a range of activities. The children's behaviour is exemplary; they show respect to their peers, the staff and visitors.
- The children are developing a very good understanding of early mathematical concepts. They confidently use a wide range of early mathematical language as they participate in investigative and problem-solving play. They count and recognise numbers, make shapes with malleable materials, engage in sorting activities, follow the sequence of the day and make comparisons of size and weight.
- All of the children listen attentively during the large-group story and contribute confidently by asking and answering open-ended questions. They join in songs and rhymes with enthusiasm.
- Almost all of the children explore their natural environment with curiosity. They enjoy being in the garden area, where they plant pumpkin seeds and transfer leaves, using a wheelbarrow, into a compost container. Most of the children use effectively a range of natural materials that reflect their interests particularly in the World Around Us topics of farming and autumn. They have a very good knowledge of towns and villages in their locality.
- The children investigate, with enthusiasm, the properties of sand, dough and paint, for example, by making detailed firework models. They discuss confidently and with pride their own creative ideas. The children have very well-developed fine and gross motor skills and use, both confidently and safely, a wide range of equipment including real kitchen utensils and authentic tools. All of the children engage actively in physical play including dance, games, and running, jumping, climbing and throwing beanbags into a target.
- The children who require support with aspects of their learning are making excellent progress and are well integrated into the group.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- The staff plan a broad and balanced programme which provides good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The short-, medium- and long-term planning for all areas across the curriculum has recently been revised; the staff have appropriately identified the need for further development. The staff know the children very well and operate a key worker system to collate observations and assessments of the children's progress; however, these are not yet being used consistently enough to inform short-term planning.
- The staff create a stimulating, well-organised, attractive learning environment with resources that are readily accessible to the children. The outdoor provision provides different contexts and opportunities for the children to apply their learning. There is a good balance between free play and organised activities. Nearly all routines and transitions are managed effectively; however, the staff do not exploit fully the learning potential within the tidy-up routine.

- All of the staff are very effective in promoting the children's language and learning by modelling vocabulary, asking open-ended questions and supporting independence and social skills. They listen carefully to and take their lead from the children, making good use of spontaneous opportunities for the children to extend their learning.
- Children who need additional support with their learning are identified early and their progress is recorded regularly. There is a close liaison with parents and other agencies which ensures effective communication and on-going support.
- 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 staff have a very positive and nurturing approach towards the children which enhances their self-esteem and confidence.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership of the playgroup is very good. The staff team and management committee work extremely well collaboratively; they combine their complementary talents and skills very well to achieve high expectations. There is a culture of self-evaluation and reflection which identifies appropriate priorities for improvement through the effective development planning processes.
- The management committee support the staff very well in their work through fundraising and contributing to the development plan. The early years specialist provides clear guidance and support for improvement.
- There are very good links between the parents, local schools and other agencies. The 'Big Bedtime Read', and 'Happy Healthy Kids' as part of the Department of Education's 'Getting Ready to Learn' strategy, have impacted positively on the children's interest in books, well-being and on parental engagement. Visitors to the setting, for example, a cook, music specialists and volunteer gardeners are enriching the children's learning experiences.
- The Management Committee are supportive of the Sharing from the Start Programme in the playgroup. They work alongside the staff and early years specialist to progress the working relationships within the local community. This has included the organisation of joint events, such as, the children visiting each other's playgroup and a joint trip to Gortin Glen.

## **8. Safeguarding**

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

However, Sugar and Spice Early Years Centre needs to:

- update the Safeguarding Policy and the Pastoral Care Policy, and risk assessments in line with the guidance from the relevant departments.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Sugar and Spice Early Years Centre has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

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 chairperson of 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 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 impact 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:

<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>

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