

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Taylorstown Cross Community
Pre-school, Toomebridge,
County Antrim

Report of an inspection in
March 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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CONTENTS

Section	Page
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. Overall effectiveness	3

Appendices

- A. Information on sessions and staff
- B. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Taylorstown Cross Community Pre-school is situated in a rural area near Grange. It is accommodated in a purpose-built unit with an adjoining outdoor play space; it operates one part-time funded session and additional afternoon sessions for younger non-funded children. The children who attend come from a very wide catchment area. Since the last inspection the accommodation has been extended to provide a welcome area and an additional room for quiet activities.

Number of children:	
Attending part-time	26
Funded by Department of Education	26
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average attendance for the previous year.	96%
Number of days open in previous school year	188

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 small number of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses were highly positive about the provision including the effective communication with parents and the progress the children make.

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:

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

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Important areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Provision for learning	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- A majority of the children are making good progress across most areas of the pre-school curriculum. A significant minority are not engaging well enough in sustained and productive independent play.
- The children are developing their social skills well, and manage independently the daily routines. They enjoy books and listening to stories and, when provided with appropriate adult support, the children persevere in, complete and talk about their activities. They use the language of measurement and the use of sand timers during their play.
- The children take on family roles during their home play and experiment with making marks and using tools such as brushes, scissors and pens. They show curiosity and high levels of involvement when, for example, they investigate the natural materials provided including the water play, plant in the compost and dig in the bark area outdoors. Overall, the children's imaginative and creative work, use of construction materials and sustained, independent collaborative play is underdeveloped for the time of year.
- Children who require support with aspects of their learning are well integrated and are beginning to access the curriculum more fully with individual adult support. The staff team do not have consistently high expectations for, and need to support more effectively, the small number of children who do not settle independently to purposeful play.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff interactions with the children are not effective enough to promote consistently a high level of learning and development across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. In the best practice the staff listen carefully to the children as they express their own ideas, model well a range of vocabulary and mathematical language and extend their thinking and learning. More often, in the less effective practice the staff miss opportunities to hold sustained conversations with the children to draw out the learning potential of activities fully or do not effectively promote child-led, creative and sustained use of materials.
- The staff work collaboratively to plan a broad pre-school programme which provides satisfactory to good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- The staff create a very attractive and welcoming learning environment which supports independent access to materials both indoors and outdoors. The displays of children's own work, cosy book areas and the addition of natural and real items enhance the environment. The provision for special educational needs has been enhanced through the additional resourcing of a one to one assistant and the development of a quiet and sensory room.
- The short-term planning is not guiding fully the staff interactions, ensuring all areas of the curriculum are being managed and developed effectively, both indoors and outdoors, and linking the assessment information well enough to the children's individual needs and interests.

- Children with additional needs are identified and individual plans are in place; the actions to be taken to support the children in meeting their targets are not identified sufficiently. Effective links are maintained with parents and other agencies to foster a joined-up approach to the support being provided.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to the care and welfare of the children impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. The caring and inclusive ethos and excellent working relationships at levels fosters a positive climate for young children to learn, develop well their social skills and foster a sense of security.

7. Leadership and management

- The pre-school is emerging from a period of extended staff absence which has impacted negatively on developmental work and continuous improvement. The development plan needs to be amended in light of the inspection findings; the action plans are not sufficiently focused on the curriculum or linked to evidence of improvements in the children's learning.
- The staff work well as a team and are committed to developing their practice further. There is evidence of reflective practice and ongoing improvements in for example the extensions to the accommodation, development of the outdoor area, improved resources and links with local schools. The management committee are kept well informed about pre-school and contribute very effectively to fundraising and linking with the wider community.
- The independent early years specialist guidance is valued by the staff. While there is evidence that aspects of the support are contributing to improvements in provision, the feedback and training for staff is not linked closely enough to evidence of improvement in the children's learning.
- The effective links with local schools promote smooth transitions for the children. Parental views are valued: the lending library, informative newsletter and involvement in the Big Bedtime Read all contribute to promoting parents involvement in their children's learning.
- During the inspection, the pre-school provided evidence that comprehensive arrangements are in place for safeguarding children which reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

CONCLUSION

8. Overall effectiveness

Taylorstown Cross Community Pre-school needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are to:

- develop the quality of the staff interactions with the children to promote more consistently a high level of learning and development across all areas of the pre-school curriculum;

- develop the children's own imaginative and creative work, use of construction materials and sustained, independent collaborative play both indoors and outdoors; and
- review and develop the action plans to focus more clearly on the curriculum and link to evidence of improvements in the children's learning.

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 in 12 to 18 months.

Information on sessions and staff

Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	2.75	

Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	1	5
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	1	5
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		
New appointments within the previous 12 months		

Source: data provided by the setting.

* Total placements since September of current year

N/A not available

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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and 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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