

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Tiny Tots Community  
Playgroup, Stewartstown,  
County Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in  
April 2016

*eti*

The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

**Providing Inspection Services for:**

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
Department for Communities

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



## Quantitative 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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on 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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## 1. Inspection method and evidence base

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

Inspectors observed learning and teaching 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 meeting with those involved with leadership and management including the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete confidential questionnaires.

A small number of the staff responded to the confidential, online questionnaire. Overall, the responses indicated satisfaction with the quality of the provision. There were no returns to the confidential, parental questionnaire. The responses were shared with the staff and management group.

## 2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all children, the purpose of inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to evaluate the:

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

## 3. Context

Stewartstown Community Playgroup is located in a purpose-built mobile in the grounds of Stewartstown Primary School. The leader and almost all of the staff were in post at the time of the previous inspection in November, 2007; since then, one new member of staff has joined the team.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
<b>Achievements and standards</b>	Very good
<b>Provision for learning</b>	Very good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Very good

## **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children are settled and confident; they play together in a friendly and collaborative way, taking turns, sharing their ideas and the resources. They readily turn to the staff for support to extend their ideas and are motivated to make independent choices and decisions about their play. The children's behaviour is exemplary.
- Most of the children are developing appropriate speech and language skills and concentration. They have acquired an excellent awareness of mathematical language and can apply this when playing at the dough, sand and water activities. Observation of real plants and pictures of living creatures is reflected in the children's detailed explanations and representations of their world around them.
- The children enjoy mark-making and are beginning to show an awareness of the meaning and link with text in the environment. They enjoy looking at nature books and handle all books with care. During the inspection, the children often browsed in the books for pictures related to their learning which were accessible in the areas of play.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The staff plan a comprehensive programme for the children which includes all areas of the pre-school curriculum and they take appropriate account of the children's interests and differing needs. The key worker system, where each staff member is involved in the assessment of the children's learning, is effective and informs the planned programme.
- A stimulating learning environment with authentic resources enriches the children's broad and balanced learning experiences and encourages high levels of curiosity and sensory learning. The organisation of the day is used effectively to promote learning from the snack routine and transitions.
- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is skilful and engages the children to explore, experiment and investigate colour changes, the properties of fruits and the features of spiders to develop effectively the children's awareness of the world around them. The staff sustain interaction with the children which promotes effective language development and thinking skills.
- The staff have identified a small number of children with additional language needs and have a range of highly effective strategies to develop attention, listening and understanding through enjoyable story sessions, singing and making repeating rhythms with musical instruments.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. There is a welcoming, positive, respectful ethos which impacts on the work of the playgroup. The staff know the children well, and respond with care to their needs and interests.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity; the children enjoy healthy snacks and participate in a varied range of energetic physical activities.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The playgroup leader and staff are committed to the development of the playgroup and sustain provision which is consistently meeting the needs of the children. Parents are consulted through a questionnaire about the provision and have very good opportunities to discuss their children's progress and development. There are close links with the management committee and each term progress reports are provided to keep the members well-informed about the development plan.
- While there has been a turnover of early years specialists from the Early Years Organisation, continuity of effective support to the playgroup has been maintained. Going forward, the early years specialists needs to focus on the development of action-planning for improvement which is clearly related to the impact on the children's learning experiences and ensure that the outcomes are monitored.
- The staff have developed effective links with the parents through, for example, regular informative newsletters, educational visits and information sessions. The playgroup manages effectively a very limited budget to sustain the highly effective pre-school programme and is challenged significantly by the loss of funding due to the transfer of small number of children throughout the school year to reception groups in primary schools.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

Stewartstown Community Playgroup 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.

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON TINY TOTS COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP,  
STEWARTSTOWN.**

**1. Details of children**

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>
Attending full-time	16
Attending part-time	4
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	12
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	1
With English as an additional language	0
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	1

\* On 1 July.

\*\* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	8%
Average attendance for the previous year.	93%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

**2. Duration of sessions**

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
	2.75 hours	

**3. Details of staff**

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

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

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

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