

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Wee Care Day Nursery, Belfast

Report of an Inspection in
March 2014

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:

| DESCRIPTOR |
|----------------|
| 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.

| Questionnaire | Number issued | Number returned | Percentage returned | Number with comments |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Parents | 15 | * | 27 ¹ | * |
| Staff | 3 | * | * | * |

* fewer than 5

The parents who responded to the questionnaire were positive about almost all aspects of the pre-school provision provided and commented favourably on the quality of care and teaching provided by the day nursery.

2. Context

Wee Care Day Nursery is a privately-operated day nursery in East Belfast. The pre-school playroom provides funded places for the morning pre-school programme; a number of the children continue in the setting in the afternoon for privately funded child-care. This is the first inspection of the setting since they entered the pre-school expansion programme in September 2012.

3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

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

¹ The ETI is trialling a new range of methods to collect the views of parents/carers and, as a result, the percentage of questionnaires returned may be low.

4. Overall finding

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Overall Performance Level | Good |
| Achievements and Standards | Good |
| Provision | Good |
| Leadership and Management | Good |

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- Throughout the session the children are well-settled and focus very purposefully in sustained play. They access the resources they require independently and are confident in the routines in the playroom. A small number of children are beginning to play collaboratively with their peers and the staff has appropriately identified the need to develop further this co-operative play among all of the children.
- The children communicate clearly with the adults in the room and are confident in approaching them for support or assistance. They listen well during circle-time sessions and respond very enthusiastically to the rhymes, songs and movement in the formal music session. The majority of the children show a good interest in engaging in the wide range of early mark-making opportunities, in particular, those at the role play and construction activities. Books are displayed attractively around the playroom; however during the inspection the children showed limited interest in their use.
- The children respond well to the early maths opportunities in the playroom and were observed counting, sorting and matching, pattern making, comparing size and responding to positional language. They enjoy handling and using the natural and real resources available and show a keen interest in the world around us through planting seeds and caring for living things.

6. Provision

- The day nursery provides a broad and balanced pre-school programme for the children, with good to very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff work hard to provide a bright and well-equipped playroom and a safe outdoor play area, in which they are currently developing the range of learning opportunities across all areas of learning. The timetable and routines in the playroom are well-established; however the staff should review the organisation of the whole-group story session, in order to allow the children to begin their play activities earlier and enable more effective use of the story time sessions to promote a greater interest in books.
- The adult interactions with the children range from good to very good in quality. In the very best practice observed, the adults promote well the children's curiosity and inquiry alongside a sense of fun and enjoyment in their learning through effective questioning and problem-solving approaches. They respond well to the interests of the children and facilitate their learning with appropriate additional resources. During the inspection, the adults were most effective in promoting the children's understanding of the world around us through a range of interesting activities which encouraged observation and investigation skills.

- The written planning provides progression in the children's learning and staff make good use of their weekly evaluations of the planning, to reflect on the effectiveness of the programme. A good start has been made by the staff to developing a systematic approach to observing the children at play, recording their responses and assessing their stage of learning. These observations are being used to inform future planning; however it will be important for the staff to ensure that they continue to make subsequent observations of the children in order to monitor their progress.
- There is a welcoming and friendly ethos in the pre-school room. The adults engage with the children in a caring, respectful way and the children are secure and relaxed, turning to the adults readily for support or help.
- The children are provided with a healthy snack and have very good opportunities for energetic physical play in the large outdoor play area.

7. Leadership and management

- The playroom leader and day nursery co-ordinator have a strong vision and drive and are very committed to the continued development of the pre-school. There is a good team approach developing among the playroom staff and the leader is a very good role-model in her own practice. The day nursery has recently changed early years support and now has an Independent Early Years Specialist (IEYS) who is providing appropriately focused support.
- There is an outline three-year development plan in place and recently established formalised structures for self-evaluation to promote improvement. It will be important for the staff, with the support of their IEYS, to continue to develop their confidence and understanding in using these self-evaluation structures to ensure the continued development of the provision in the pre-school and that the highest standards are achieved by all of the children.
- There are effective links with the parents in the day nursery and the monthly newsletters provide good information on the events and programme in the pre-school and suggestions of how the parents can support their child's learning at home. There have been a small number of educational trips and visitors to the day nursery, which have enriched the children's learning opportunities. The day nursery has appropriately identified the need to develop further the involvement of parents and the wider community, including local primary schools, in contributing to the learning programme and ensuring a smooth transition to the next stage of education.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the day nursery has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the day nursery is good. The day nursery has important strengths in most of its educational (and pastoral) provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the day nursery has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the day nursery's progress on the areas for improvement.

The area for improvement is the need for:

- the staff, with the support of their IEYS, to continue to develop further their use of the self-evaluative process in order to ensure the continued development of the pre-school provision so that all of the children achieve their full potential.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Name of pre-school setting: | Wee Care Day Nursery |
| Address: | 8 Kings Road Knock BELFAST BT5 6JJ |
| Management Type: | Private |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Date of inspection: | 24 March 2014 |
| Date of previous inspection: | N/A |

1. Details of Children

| Total number of children: | am session | pm session |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| attending the pre-school setting | 15 | - |
| in their immediate pre-school year | 15 | - |
| funded by Department of Education (DE) | 15 | - |
| qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2 | 15 | - |
| with a statement of special educational needs | 0 | - |
| without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs | 0 | - |
| with English as an additional language | 2 | - |
| who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school | 0 | - |
| Attendance: | | |
| attendance** of funded children for the previous school year | 90% | - |

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

| Number of: | Full-time | Part-time |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Staff, including leader | 3 | |
| 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 | 0 | |

| Number of: *** | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Students | 0 |
| Trainees | 0 |

*** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

| Duration of morning session | Duration of afternoon session | Number of days open in previous year |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 2½ hours | hours | 189 |

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