

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Wishing Well Pre-school in the
Wishing Well Family Centre,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection in
January 2016

eti

*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

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; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

There were no responses to the confidential questionnaire by the parents. The staff responses to the questionnaire were deemed invalid due to an error in the input of data.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest 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

The Wishing Well Pre-school is part of the Wishing Well Family Centre which provides day care and other services to families in North Belfast. At the time of the inspection, the pre-school leader had returned from a period of absence.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement
Achievements and standards	Important areas for improvement
Provision for learning	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Requires significant improvement

5. Achievements and standards

- The children appear happy and secure within the playroom; they settle quickly to activities and co-operate well with the daily snack routine. The children enjoy listening informally to stories in the book area and during larger group sessions. Most of the children participate enthusiastically in a good repertoire of songs and rhymes which they enjoy. A significant minority of children demonstrate an early awareness of mathematical concepts and language as they match, sort, count and make comparisons as an integral part of their play and routines. When supported effectively by the staff to develop their own ideas, the children explore and investigate the properties of natural materials, such as, dough, water and sand for short periods.
- During the inspection, there was insufficient evidence of children developing independently their own self-initiated imaginative and creative ideas; in particular, the art work and role play are underdeveloped. The children's exploratory and investigative play, and the associated language needs to be developed more consistently through the planning and staff interactions. There was limited interest by the children in mark making and experimental writing.

6. Provision for learning

- The playroom is set out attractively with a good range of resources which are accessible to the children. There is an extensive outdoor area which needs to be planned for and used more effectively to promote learning across all areas of the curriculum.
- The staff are caring and welcoming to the children and, at times, introduce appropriately ideas to extend the children's language and learning. Overall, the staff need to develop a better shared understanding of how to build on the children's ideas to promote language and learning more consistently and effectively during play.
- The staff are in the early stages of making a link between their assessment information and their weekly planning to ensure the programme meets the needs of all of the children. The planning needs to demonstrate more fully the progression in the learning and resources pertaining to both indoor and outdoor play.
- While the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning and development are well integrated and settled into the group, the policy and systems in place for planning, record keeping and tracking the children's progress require further development. The staff require further training and support to meet fully the children's needs.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in this pre-school has important areas for improvement. While the staff have a caring and friendly approach to both the children and the parents the link between the planning and assessment needs to improve to ensure the needs of all of the children are met more fully and they make more consistent progress across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- The children are provided with healthy food for their break. They need more regular planned opportunities for energetic outdoor play throughout the year to help them to develop a healthy lifestyle.

7. Leadership and management

- There have been significant staff changes both within the pre-school and in the early years specialist support provided over a two-year period; this has impacted negatively on the continuous improvement of the pre-school. The current early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation has provided a range of appropriate guidance and training for the staff.
- The processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement in the quality of the provision and better outcomes for the children are at an early stage of development at all levels. The committee, manager and staff need to develop a better shared understanding of quality pre-school provision and develop more effective systems to identify staff development requirements, set clear action plans focusing on outcomes for the children, and to monitor and evaluate improvement. The management has identified the need to acquire additional personnel with expertise in the pre-school programme to raise the quality further.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department. The following areas need to be addressed:
 - ensure the staff have an up-to-date working knowledge of all the policies and know how to apply them to the pre-school room;
 - tailor the centre's policies more specifically to the pre-school room; and
 - the management and designated officer to complete the necessary training as identified in their plans.

8. Overall effectiveness

The Wishing Well Pre-school 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 pre-school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement which include the need to:

- promote more consistently the skills of the staff in supporting the children's own independence, creative and imaginative play, language and learning;
- continue to plan suitable progression in learning across all areas of the curriculum linked more closely to the assessment information to meet the needs and interests of individual children including those identified with additional needs; and
- develop more effective, strategic leadership and management linked to systematic self-evaluation and development planning to promote continuous improvement.

There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 18 to 24 months.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON WISHING WELL PRE-SCHOOL

1. Details of children

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

* 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.	12.5
Average attendance for the previous year.	90%
Number of days open in previous school year	197

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	09.00 am-12.00 pm	

3. Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders		3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		
New appointments within the previous 12 months		1

Number of: ***	
Volunteers	1
Trainees	

*** Total placements since September of current year

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