

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Woodlands Pre-School Centre,
Strabane

Report of an Inspection in
May 2014

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

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	30	16	53% ¹	6
Staff	*	*	*	*

* fewer than 5

The parents who responded were very positive about all aspects of the educational and pastoral provision provided by the centre. In particular, they commented on the approachable and caring staff, the effective communication and the progress evident in the children's learning and development.

2. Context

The cross-community playgroup is accommodated in mobile accommodation within the grounds of Donemana Primary School. A new leader and assistant leader were appointed in September 2012. The children come mainly from the village and the surrounding area.

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 range of methods to collect the views of parents/carers and, as a result, the response rate 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

- The children are developing very positive attitudes to their learning. They are independent in choosing activities, can manage confidently the daily routines and are developing good social skills. Most of the children are engaging in co-operative play; a minority of the children still require adult support to remain at activities for a sustained period of time.
- Most of the children are confident in communicating their ideas. They listen attentively to stories and participate well in action rhymes and songs. The children can recognise their name and label their work, and a small number are engaging in experimental writing.
- The children are developing well their concept of early mathematics and language. They can sort, count, match and make comparisons of size and shape naturally through their play.
- Many of the children display an interest in their environment and experiment with natural materials. They are developing well their creativity and imagination through the retelling of stories and taking on various roles in the home corner.

6. Provision

- The staff have created an attractive, stimulating learning environment where children's work is displayed and annotated with the children's thoughts and ideas. The daily timetable provides a good balance of extended free play and activities organised by the staff.
- The staff are sensitive and supportive in their engagement with the children. In the best practice, the staff promote purposeful play by using open-ended questions to develop the children's language and extend their thinking as they work alongside them. To improve further, the staff need to maintain high quality interaction throughout the whole session and ensure that all of the children are fully engaged in learning.
- The staff are making good progress in developing their planning and assessment methods. The broad and balanced programme provides good to very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The assessment records include relevant settling-in information and clear evidence of the children's progress and development. The staff have appropriately identified the need to further develop the planning for outdoor play to meet the wide variation in the children's stages of development.

- The quality of pastoral care is good. There is a welcoming and inclusive ethos based on good working relationships at all levels. The behaviour of the children is very good. Good attention is given to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the provision of a healthy snack and opportunities for the children to engage in energetic play.

7. Leadership and management

Since the last inspection, there is a new staff team. All of the staff are hard-working and contribute as a team to the improvement and development of the provision. They have an appropriate three year development plan which outlines a number of relevant priorities and have a strong commitment to ongoing professional development, for example, their involvement in the Special Educational Needs in Early Years capacity building pilot. The independent early years specialist provides good guidance and support to the team.

The staff provide detailed and relevant information for parents through regular meetings, written reports and newsletters and have developed good pastoral links with the local primary schools to provide a smooth transition for the children. The centre has good links with the local community and makes effective use of outside agencies in order to meet the needs of the children.

On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments but the following area needs to be addressed; the deputy designated member of staff needs to complete her training as soon as possible.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the playgroup is good. The playgroup has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The areas for improvement are to:

- develop further the planning for outdoor play to guide the day to day work of the staff and ensure progression and challenge for the children; and
- develop further the staff interactions with the children to ensure they consistently develop the learning inherent in the activities throughout the session.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the playgroup's progress on the areas for improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Woodlands Pre School Centre
Address:	31A Longland Road Donemana STRABANE BT82 0PH
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	27 May 2014
Date of previous inspection:	27 March 2006

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	19	11
in their immediate pre-school year	19	11
funded by Department of Education (DE)	19	11
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	19	11
with a statement of special educational needs	0	0
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs		
with English as an additional language	0	0
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	0
Attendance:		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	93.5%	

* 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		4
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	4
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	2½ hours	

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