

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Hansel and Gretel Pre-School,
Glynn, Larne

Report of an Inspection in
November 2013



Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



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 Education and Training Inspectorate's (ETI) publication *Together Towards Improvement pre-school/Education and Training Inspectorate: a process for self evaluation* at: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-pre-school.htm>.

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	6	*	* ¹	**
Staff	6	*	*	**

* fewer than 5

The parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the pre-school provision. In particular, the parents acknowledged the caring and approachable staff, the well organised centre and the progress the children are making.

2. Context

Hansel and Gretel Pre-school is accommodated in Glynn village hall. The children attending the pre-school playgroup come from within a radius of 5 miles.

3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards;
- the quality of provision in the playgroup; 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	Outstanding
Achievements and Standards	Outstanding
Provision	Outstanding
Leadership and Management	Outstanding

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children demonstrate very good progress in their overall development in relation to their age and the time of the year. They are well settled and very familiar with the daily routines. They engage in lengthy periods of concentrated, productive and co-operative play; they are eager to explore and make full use of the highly stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- They are interested in the wide range of natural materials displayed throughout the play areas, which entice the children's sensory awareness. The children handle tools and equipment competently.
- The staff have created a language rich environment with promotes and extends the children's language development. Nearly all of the children talk about their experiences confidently and show a good interest in mark making. The high level of independence has been nurtured by the staff's skilful planning and attention to detail.

6. Provision

- The daily timetable is thoughtfully planned which results in smooth transitions between large group activities, snack time, outdoor play to physical movement and dance sessions. All of the time is used well for learning, for example: tidy up time affords every child the opportunity to share, respect and take responsibility for an aspect of their environment.
- The quality of interaction between the staff and the children is outstanding; the adults engage purposefully with the children, listening to them and building effectively on their ideas. They encourage the children to recall, predict and problem-solve and they use mathematical language in a very natural, appropriate and incidental way. The children are developing a sense of fun, excitement and wonder. A small number of children are being supported skilfully and sensitively by all of the staff to engage them more fully in play with their peers and in the development of their skills.
- The provision for pastoral care within the playgroup is outstanding. The atmosphere is warm, calm and welcoming and the pervading ethos is one of caring support and respect for the children and their families. The pre-school's underpinning child-centred philosophy to learning is exemplified in the daily practice which fosters and values the children's imagination and creative dispositions to learning.

- There are excellent learning opportunities in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Of significant note is the development of the children's personal, social and emotional well-being, language, creative and physical skills. Excellent use is made of the seasons and the environment to extend the children's knowledge of, and interest in, the world around them.
- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently very good with many examples of outstanding discussions with the children to extend their thinking skills, learning and vocabulary.
- The planning and assessment methods are highly effective. The planning is flexible to allow for the staff to take account of the children's interests, responses and curiosities. The staff record systematically their perceptive observations of the children's play; this information is analysed appropriately to inform future activities and to meet and challenge each child's individual needs.
- Parents are kept well informed through monthly newsletters and relevant reports on their child's progress. The learning experiences are shared and discussed visually each day by the children and their parents, carers and staff members through the uploaded photographs on the computer, depicting examples of the learning that has taken place. The very good pastoral and curricular links established with the local primary school fosters smooth transitions into year 1
- The staff give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The children have healthy snacks and daily opportunities to play outdoors in a stimulating outdoor environment, including experiencing a varied and progressive range of physical activities clearly focused on meeting their individual needs.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader is highly motivated and provides outstanding leadership. She has inspired a strong sense of team spirit among the staff, they are a highly skilled team who share her commitment to innovative improvement. Priority is given to the professional development of all staff including students. Events are also organised for the parents with a focus on developing a learning community.
- The pre-school's thoughtful development plan identifies sharply focused areas for review and development and demonstrate the staff's reflective approach to evaluating their work. The detailed action plans promote and result in enriching the children's learning experiences. The management committee actively support and collaborate with the staff to develop the provision for the benefits of the whole community.
- The staff has the support of an early years specialist deployed by the early years organisation. She provides regular and supportive visits to the group and has enabled them to access appropriate training and support in the development of the centre's provision.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the pre-school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this pre-school is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The pre-school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Hansel and Gretel Pre-school
Address:	Glynn Village Hall Main Road Glynn LARNE Co Antrim BT40 3HF
Management Type:	Voluntary

Date of inspection:	20 November 2013
Date of previous inspection:	February 2007

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	17	-
in their immediate pre-school year	12	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	12	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	12	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	4	-
with English as an additional language	0	-
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	92%	-

* 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	1
Trainees	

*** 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
3 hours	-	188

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