

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Belleek Pre-School Playgroup,
Co Fermanagh

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	23	6	26% ¹	*
Staff	*	*	*	*

* fewer than 5

The parents who responded were wholly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. They commented on the friendly and helpful staff and the very good progress made by the children.

2. Context

The playgroup is accommodated in the Stepping Stones Childcare Centre in Belleek village. The children come from a wide surrounding area. One new member of staff has been appointed since the last inspection. The deputy leader and a student on placement are completing the Level 5 Childcare Leadership and Management course.

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	Outstanding
Achievements and Standards	Outstanding
Provision	Outstanding
Leadership and Management	Outstanding

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are well settled and are very familiar with the daily routines. They engage in sustained, purposeful play, show high levels of independence in accessing resources, and have acquired very good self-help skills. The children are well-mannered and their behaviour is excellent.
- Most of the children have a well-developed sensory awareness and demonstrate very good progress in their development of vocabulary to express their thoughts and ideas. The children listen and respond well to stories and rhymes. They use a wide range of tools effectively to experiment with mark-making and early writing.
- The children are encouraged appropriately by the staff to use mathematical language as they talk about their work. Most of the children are able to count, sort, order and create patterns in a range of different contexts.
- The children have a natural interest and curiosity about their environment. During the inspection, many of the children were observed, playing imaginatively in the role play corner, creating detailed and representational drawings of lambs and daffodils, and tending to the plants and flowers in the outdoor play area. A majority of the children are adventurous in their climbing and are developing a good range of gross motor skills.

6. Provision

- The staff have worked hard to create a bright and attractive learning environment where the children's work is displayed and celebrated. The daily timetable is thoughtfully planned to provide a programme that is broad and well-balanced. Snack time is used effectively to develop the children's social skills and as a learning opportunity to promote mathematical thinking.
- The quality of the staff interactions with the children was always good and in the majority of instances was very good or outstanding. In the best practice, the adults introduce early mathematical language naturally across all areas of play and use open-ended questions to encourage the children to think and problem-solve. The children respond positively to their peers and staff.

- Planning is of an excellent quality; it is built on themes, follows the interests of the children, and has a clear progression. The assessment methods are used very effectively to record progress and identify areas for support and development for individual children. Newcomer children and those with speech and language difficulties are integrated well into the playgroup and are making good progress.
- The provision for pastoral care within the playgroup is outstanding. Staff members create a welcoming and inclusive environment in which every child is valued, cared for and developed to achieve their full potential. They engage with the children in a respectful and caring manner and are active in promoting the children's confidence and self-esteem.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity with the provision of a healthy break and daily opportunities for energetic physical play in the imaginative outdoor area.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader and the deputy leader work effectively as a team, ably supported by staff. They have worked tirelessly to improve the quality of the provision, and to raise the profile of the playgroup within the local community. Staff members are committed to their personal continuing professional development and are supported well by management. The comprehensive and sharply focused development plan and associated action plans identify relevant priorities for improvement, including positive behaviour management and supporting children with speech and language difficulties.
- The independent early years specialist provides excellent support by meeting with the staff regularly. She has recently supported the staff in developing peer observation to promote improvement. The early years specialist co-ordinates the staff's ongoing access to support through the local cluster of playgroups that meet regularly to share good practice and resources.
- The playgroup has excellent links with the parents; they receive regular newsletters and are invited to attend fun days, quizzes and the nativity play. Excellent use is made of visitors to the playgroup, for example, the postman and the Cedar Foundation, to enhance the children's learning experiences. There are close and effective links with the local schools to which the children transfer.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the playgroup 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 this playgroup is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The playgroup has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Name of pre-school setting:	Belleek Pre-School Playgroup
Address:	Stepping Stones Centre Station Road BELLEEK Co Fermanagh BT93 3FY
Management Type:	Private voluntary

Date of inspection:	19 March 2014
Date of previous inspection:	23 March 2006

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	24	-
in their immediate pre-school year	24	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	24	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	4	-
with a statement of special educational needs	-	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	-	-
with English as an additional language	1	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	2	-
Attendance:		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	89%	-

* 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	1

*** 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	-	189

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