

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION

Killough Playgroup, Killough, County Down

Voluntary, DE Ref No 4BB-0388

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in January 2023



Providing Inspection services for:
Department of Education
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Follow-up to the inspection of Killough Playgroup, Killough, BT30 7QD (4BB-0388)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Killough Playgroup in December 2019¹, which concluded that the pre-school needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners, namely to:

- appoint suitably qualified staff in order to provide high quality learning experiences for all of the children;
- improve the skills and knowledge of the management committee to monitor and evaluate effectively the quality of the provision;
- improve the outcomes of the children across all areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- improve the quality, planning and assessment of the pre-school programme;
- improve the quality of the staff interactions to promote the children's learning;
- introduce a process of self-evaluation and action planning leading to improvement; and
- address the unsatisfactory safeguarding.

The pre-school's action plans were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI. The pre-school's development plan was also adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

ETI evaluated the progress in addressing the unsatisfactory arrangements for safeguarding in May 2021. On the basis of that evaluation, the unsatisfactory safeguarding arrangements had been addressed and that the safeguarding provision reflected broadly the guidance issued by the relevant departments.

The ETI carried out a monitoring visit in May 2021 and a follow-up inspection in January 2023.

In the interval since the inspection, the pre-school has received external support from the Early Years Organisation (EYO) through a 12-week intensive support programme, interrupted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pre-school has also benefited from virtual and on-site visits by the Early Years Specialist (EYS) and the provision of training and development for the management committee.

¹ [Pre-School Inspection - Killough Playgroup, Killough, County Down 4BB-0388 \(etini.gov.uk\)](https://etini.gov.uk)

Over the same period, the key actions or changes which have affected the work of the pre-school include the:

- appointment of a leader and deputy leader and a new chair of the management committee.

As a consequence of the external support and the key changes and actions taken within the pre-school, there have been improvements in the quality of education as reported in the key findings below.

Key findings

The outcomes for learners have improved and are now good.

All of the children are well-settled and are making good progress for the time of year. Most of the children are confident in the routines of the playgroup and show increasing levels of independence. The children put on and take off their coats, access resources, manage well the snack routine and tidy the playroom. The children are particularly interested in mark making and experiment with a range of writing tools both indoors and outdoors; a small number of children can write their name on their work. Most of the children are developing well their early understanding of mathematical language and concepts, and were observed counting, sorting, ordering, weighing and exploring shape through the various play activities.

The quality of provision has improved and is now good.

The significant improvements made to the layout of the playroom, outdoor provision, resources, and organisation of the session now provide the children with a wider range of opportunities to engage in child-led, investigative play across all areas of the curriculum. The staff engage effectively with the children to introduce new language, develop early mathematical concepts and nurture the children's creativity and imagination. The staff have reviewed recently their processes for observation and assessment of the children's learning and have identified appropriately the need to develop further this process to inform the short-term planning to meet the individual needs of the children.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement have improved and are now good.

There is now a collegial approach to leadership. The management committee are well-informed about the work of the playgroup and have provided practical support to the staff in improving the quality of the learning environment. The leadership team has been proactive in identifying and accessing appropriate professional learning opportunities and are more reflective in their practice. Through ongoing self-evaluation, and working closely with the EYS, the leadership team has identified appropriately the need to use observations of the children's learning to inform planning and to develop further the planning for outdoor learning. The ongoing quality improvement work is outlined clearly in the well-constructed action plans.

Overall effectiveness

Killough Playgroup now demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the pre-school sustains improvement in:

- the effective use of assessments of the children's learning in order to inform better the planning for progression; and
- the processes for self-evaluation.

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