

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Colum's Pre-School Centre,  
Portstewart, County Londonderry

Voluntary playgroup

Report of a Follow-up inspection  
in June 2017



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## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST COLUM'S PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE, PORTSTEWART (3BB-0369)**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection in St Colum's Pre-School Centre in April 2016 which concluded that the playgroup needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement were:

- to develop the planning to include a clear focus on the learning to be promoted in the planned activities and to guide the staff more effectively in their work with the children; and
- to enhance and exploit all opportunities to develop the children's imagination and creativity.

The playgroup's action plan was of a good quality and was adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI during the interim visit.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an interim follow-up visit in September 2016 and a follow-up inspection on 7 June 2017.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions or changes which affect the work of the playgroup have taken place:

- there has been a change in the staff team;
- the conversion from two part-time sessions to one;
- key development work was undertaken to improve the quality of the observations, assessments and planning;
- the indoor and outdoor play areas were improved and enhanced with the addition of more real-life and natural resources;
- the staff visited several other settings to observe practice; and
- an early years specialist provided regular training, guidance and support.

### **Key Findings**

The children's outcomes remain good. Most of the children settle enthusiastically to their chosen tasks and spend lengthy periods in productive play. Overall, most of the children are developing well their independence and disposition to learn and are making good or better progress across the pre-school curriculum.

The quality of the provision for learning is now good overall. The staff have a better shared understanding of progression in the children's programme for learning and how this is informed by careful observation and assessment of the children's stages of development. The interaction of adults and children is usually effective in promoting language and learning. The adults now make good use of the play activities, including in the role-play and art areas, and through engaging action songs and stories, to promote the imaginative and creative aspects of the children's development and to extend the children's language and imagination in context.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement remains good. There is accurate identification of the playgroup's strengths and areas for improvement including, for example, the need to refine and embed further the planning.

Overall, the staff are more reflective, effective and confident in their practice; their evaluations of the improvement work brings benefits to the children.

### **Overall effectiveness**

St Colum's Pre-School Centre demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The playgroup needs to consolidate their improvements in action planning and evaluation by:

- focusing on monitoring and assessing the key developments in the progression of each child's learning; and,
- continuing to make use of the assessment information to adapt the planning and provision on a regular basis.

The ETI will continue to monitor how the playgroup sustains the improvements in the quality of provision made to date.

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