

# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



### The Academy Nursery School, Derry

Controlled Nursery School DE ref no (211-6023)

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in January 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
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## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF THE ACADEMY NURSERY SCHOOL, DERRY, BT48 7LE (211-6023)**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of The Academy Nursery School in March 2017<sup>1</sup> which concluded that the school needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners.

The significant areas for improvement were:

- to improve the quality of the provision in the full-time session, in particular, the classroom management and the methods of planning for learning and record keeping and assessment; and
- to review the leadership and management of the nursery at all levels and ensure the highest possible standards of care and education are provided for all the children.

As a consequence, the Department of Education entered the school into the Formal Intervention Process under the Every School a Good School policy on 13 April 2017<sup>2</sup>.

The nursery school's action plans were of a good quality. The development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out a follow-up visit for safeguarding in May 2017 which evaluated the arrangements for safeguarding children as reflecting broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. An interim follow-up visit was carried out in May 2018.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the school has received external support provided by the Education Authority, in relation to: professional development training for curriculum development, effective behaviour management strategies and support for children with additional needs, and leadership and management courses for school development planning. Consequently, there have been improvements in the quality of care and education as reported in the key findings below.

During this period, other actions or changes which affect the work of the school include:

- the creation of a new open plan learning environment, a sensory room, and enhanced outdoor provision;
- the establishment of a new school leadership team with an acting principal, and the appointment of a temporary assistant teacher in May 2017; and
- the governors completed relevant governance training and established sub-committees of link governors with specific roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating school improvement.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/preschool-inspection-the-academy-nursery-school-londonderry-211-6023\\_0.pdf](https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/preschool-inspection-the-academy-nursery-school-londonderry-211-6023_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/ESAGS%20Policy%20for%20School%20Improvement%20-%20Final%20Version%2005-05-2009.pdf>

## **Key findings**

The outcomes for learners are now outstanding. All of the children are well-settled and play purposefully in all classes; they display high levels of perseverance during concentrated collaborative play. The children make choices and have high levels of independence. Nearly all of the children are confident in engaging with adults to support or extend their learning. They manage all transitions very well, have excellent social and play skills and are developing friendships. A key strength is the children's ability to manage their own emotions and show empathy for others. The children's attention and listening skills and their interest in mark making and books is very well developed for the time of year. Almost all of the children are curious to explore and investigate their surroundings and are willing to experiment, take risks and solve problems in the indoor and outdoor learning environment.

The quality of provision is now outstanding. There is consistency in the practice in the full-time and part-time classes, with stimulating play provision that provides broad and appropriately challenging learning experiences. The skilful interaction of all the staff and the excellent classroom management in all classes impacts positively on the children's learning experiences and outcomes. The methods of planning for learning and record keeping are greatly improved, due to the whole staff input based on detailed observations and assessment of the children's learning; the plans are evaluated effectively to identify and build upon the needs and interests of the children. The children identified as requiring additional support with their learning are identified early. The staff use their expertise and training and the very good links with outside agencies to provide appropriate support in meeting the children's needs.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management is now outstanding. As a result of the support provided by the Education Authority and the work of the school, systematic procedures and structures are in place to successfully improve the learning environment and strategic management of the nursery school. The School Development Plan and associated action plans are effectively informed through consultation with all of the key stakeholders; the processes for monitoring and evaluating are clearly leading to improvement in the outcomes for learners and the quality of the provision. The teaching staff set high expectations for the children. All staff, including classroom assistants, take responsibility for their own professional development, share and implement good practice and effectively work as a very knowledgeable, highly motivated and well-focused collegial team dedicated to ensuring the best outcomes for all of the children. Robust procedures are in place for informing governors on the progress of the actions leading to improvement; they have an excellent understanding of their role, receive regular reports from the acting principal, and the link school improvement governors exercise well their support and challenge function.

## **Overall effectiveness**

The Academy Nursery School has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.

## Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

### 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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management<sup>3</sup>:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

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<sup>3</sup> And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

## Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

<p>The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.</p>
<p>The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.</p>
<p>The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.</p>
<p>The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.</p>

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