



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education

Department for the Economy

Department for Communities



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**TLC Playgroup
Belfast**

March 2016

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF TLC PLAYGROUP, BELFAST (1CA-0622)

The original inspection carried out in May 2014 concluded that the playgroup needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.¹

The areas for improvement included the need to:

- provide suitable progression in the children's learning across all areas of the curriculum through the further development of the planning and assessment methods;
- improve the quality of the staff interactions to promote language and learning; and
- access well focused training and support to develop further the staff's understanding of the pre-school curriculum.

The Education and Training inspectorate (ETI) carried out two monitoring visits during 2014 with a follow-up inspection in March 2016.

The action plans received by the Department of Education following the inspection were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI during the interim visits.

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

- the staff have attended a range of relevant training including guidance and support from the Early Years Inclusion Service;
- key policies including the safeguarding and special educational needs policies have been reviewed and updated;
- a new member of staff has been appointed and took up post in January 2015; and
- there have been several changes of early years specialist, the most recent taking up post in January 2016.

Key findings

- The learning environment within the playroom and the outdoor areas are stimulating and language-rich. They are well laid out and resourced effectively providing greater choice and leading to settled and productive play by the children.
- The staff interaction is of a high quality among all of the staff. The staff promote effectively the children's independence and perseverance to complete tasks. They have sustained conversations with the children, refer to books and model and extend a good range of vocabulary and mathematical language in relevant play contexts.

¹ <http://www.etni.gov.uk/index/inspection-reports/inspection-reports-pre-school-centre-and-nursery-school/inspection-reports-pre-school-2014/preschool-inspection-tlc-playgroup-belfast.pdf>

- There are good to very good opportunities to promote learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Improvements are particularly evident in the opportunities for the children to develop their investigative and exploratory play using a wide range of natural resources, the children's interest in mark making and emergent writing and their use of mathematical language.
- There are effective methods in place to exchange information about the children and the work of the playgroup between the staff and the parents.
- There is effective leadership and management of the playgroup and a strong team approach; all of the staff contribute well to the effective implementation of the programme.
- The commitment to continuous staff development and training is having a positive impact on developing the skill and understanding of the staff and is evident in the improvements in the practice.
- The action plans identify relevant priorities and there is clear evidence of significant improvement in the areas under focus including the quality of the learning environment, progression in learning and the early identification of children who have additional needs. The leadership have identified appropriately the need to improve further their methods of assessment to ensure they are systematic and used more fully to inform the planning.

Overall effectiveness

The TLC Playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2016

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website:
www.etini.gov.uk