

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Joseph's Playgroup,  
Gallagh

Report of an Inspection  
in December 2012



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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school setting:</b>	St Joseph's Playgroup
<b>Address:</b>	Church Grounds Fairview Road GALLIAGH Co Derry BT48 8NU
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	4 December 2012
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	2005

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
attending the pre-school setting	16	-
in their immediate pre-school year	16	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	16	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	9	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	-
with English as an additional language	1	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
<b>Attendance:</b>		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	86%	-

\* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

\*\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff, including leader	0	3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	0	3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	0
Trainees	0

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

## 3. Details of Sessions

<b>Duration of morning session</b>	<b>Duration of afternoon session</b>	<b>Number of days open in previous year</b>
3 hours	-	187

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	16
Percentage returned	69%
Number of written comments:	8

## 1. Introduction

St Joseph's Playgroup is situated in purpose-built accommodation within the church grounds of St Joseph's, Galliagh. The leader and the staff have been in post since the last inspection in 2005.

## 2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations and from a range of documentation provided by the playgroup.

The views of the parents, staff, and management group were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Sixteen questionnaires were issued to the parents and eleven were returned with eight written comments. All of the staff and members of the management group also returned the questionnaires with written comments. All of the returns from the questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with almost all aspects of the work of the playgroup. A small number of the management committee indicated that they would like more training and opportunities to be involved in development planning for the playgroup.

## 3. Overall finding of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is very good. The playgroup is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Very Good Very Good Very Good
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## KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

### 4. Children's Achievements

**The quality of the children's achievements is very good.**

- The children appear happy and are quick to settle to concentrated and productive play.
- During the inspection, the children readily engaged with the staff and often played collaboratively in an imaginative manner. The children's behaviour is excellent; they display high levels of confidence and independence and some of them are developing firm friendships.
- The children listen well to the adults during play and in story sessions; they turn readily to books and are interested in print. They enjoy exploring and experimenting, for example, as cooks and builders.

## **5. Provision for Learning**

**The quality of the provision for learning is very good.**

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in this playgroup is outstanding. The positive relationships at all levels foster an inclusive and supportive family ethos throughout the playgroup. The staff are very caring, listen to the children and offer choice to them in play.
- During the inspection, the staff were skilful in their interactions with the children and built effectively on the children's interest and ideas. The staff are recording observations of the children and are able to identify the children's progress and varying stages of development; they are beginning to develop strategies to help those children with additional needs. The staff have acquired training for a speech and language programme; they need to continue to embed the strategies acquired in order to address the children's identified language deficits.
- The staff have worked hard to create a bright and stimulating learning environment for the children. The children's work is celebrated and presented attractively in the playroom.
- An effective start has been made to developing a systematic approach to planning for, and assessing, the children's learning. The staff have reviewed their planning in response to their observations of children's needs and interests. They now need to refine further their planning for the organisation of periods of transitions in order to maximise the learning potential.
- There are clear lines of communication established with the parents and outside agencies to highlight any identified concerns about child development.
- The children are provided with a healthy snack and regular physical activity. The snack-time is well-used to promote the children's independence and development. Excellent opportunities are provided regularly to help develop the children's energetic physical skills.

## **6. Leadership and Management**

**The quality of leadership and management is very good.**

- The leader is a very good role model for child-centred learning. She has developed a strong staff teamwork ethos of caring for, and meeting the needs of, the children.
- The staff have appropriately begun to evaluate the quality of their planning and to focus on assessment for learning; they need to continue to refine their self-evaluation processes. The management group needs to become more involved in the planning for the ongoing improvement in the playgroup.
- The playgroup staff have the support of an effective independent early years specialist who is new to the playgroup. She has a clear vision for promoting improvement in the playgroup and is appropriately addressing the review and development of the policies that underpin the management of the playgroup.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection this playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

## CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this playgroup is very good. The playgroup is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.



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