

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Belmont Nursery School,
Londonderry

Controlled Nursery School

Report of an Inspection in
March 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. Context	1
2. Views of parents and staff	1
3. Focus of the inspection	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Outcomes for learners	2
6. Quality of provision	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Overall effectiveness	3

Appendices

- A. Information on sessions and staff
- B. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Belmont Nursery School is situated in purpose-built accommodation on the Racecourse Road in Londonderry. The building was extended and refurbished approximately four years ago. The nursery school operates a full-time session and a dual-day session. At the time of the inspection there was a temporary teacher in the dual-day session. The children attending the nursery unit come from a wide catchment area within the city including Culmore, Carnhill, Eglinton and Shantallow.

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Attending full-time	31	0	0
Attending part-time	0	27	27
Under 3 years of age*	#	#	5
Funded by Department of Education	31	27	27
With statement of special educational needs	5		1
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	0	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#	0	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	6	5	8
With English as an additional language	0	0	0
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	0	0

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	74
Average attendance for the previous year.	92%
Number of days open in previous school year	186

Source: data provided by the setting.

* On 1 July.

** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

fewer than 5

2. Views of parents and staff

A small number of the parents and almost all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The responses were wholly positive and indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the life and work of the nursery school. In particular the parents highlighted the friendly, approachable staff and the high levels of communication between home and the nursery. The staff praised the team approach and the opportunities to contribute to decision making in the nursery school.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- outcomes for the children;
- quality of provision for learning; and
- leadership and management.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
Quality of provision	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are very well-settled, confident and highly motivated in their learning. They demonstrate high levels of independence and regularly take on roles of responsibility throughout the sessions. The staff place an emphasis on the personal and social development of the children and, through thoughtful planned opportunities, the children engage with staff to express their emotions using age-appropriate language.
- The children listen intently during the shared story and rhyme times, and engage enthusiastically with staff during regular spontaneous story-telling. The children are developing well their conversational skills, taking turns to speak and ask interesting questions. They participate regularly in early mark-making often using their writing to label other activities around the playroom, and many are attempting letter formation. A particular feature of the play is the extension of learning and language during imaginative spontaneous role play initiated by the children using a range of freely available resources.
- The children have a very good understanding of a broad range of mathematical language which they can apply in context during play activities. Building on the children's natural curiosity the staff provide well-planned activities that encourage the children to predict, experiment, solve problems and make discoveries about learning. The children's well-observed and imaginative art-work is sensitively displayed around the playrooms and shared areas. In the outdoor environment the children, including those with additional learning needs, are confident in taking risks in their physical play and respond well to the challenges provided by the staff.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff have created a stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment for the children. There is a high commitment to the inclusion of children with additional learning needs. The organisation of the day and use of the shared areas encourages an inclusive ethos where regular opportunities are provided for all of the children, including those with additional learning needs, to play and learn together. The extensive outdoor area has been organised to provide a variety of diverse and interesting areas for children to explore and develop further their independence.

- The staff interactions are of a consistently high quality; they know the children well and are intuitive to their needs and interests. The staff create opportunities for enquiry and exploration, and sensitively provide time for the children to explain their thinking and ideas. Of particular note is the capacity of the staff to provide tailored interventions for children who have been identified with a broad range of additional learning needs. The daily sessions are well-focused, stimulating and build on previous learning.
- The planning is comprehensive and covers all aspects of the children's learning and development. Regular observations, staff evaluations and recording of children's progress inform future planning.
- The high quality of care and welfare impacts positively on the quality of the children's learning and development. The staff have high expectations of the children and nurture a positive attitude to learning in a safe and secure environment.

7. Leadership and management

- The long-serving and experienced nursery school principal is well-supported by a skilled team of staff who are dedicated to providing high quality provision for the children in the nursery school. The staff's commitment to the community is extended through links with a variety of community partnership organisations and other local pre-school settings, to provide support for families with children and babies who are not yet nursery school age. The nursery school is very well managed by an experienced board of governors.
- The staff have availed of an extensive range of training opportunities to meet the needs of the children. Funding from extended schools provides part-time employment of a speech and language specialist to provide high quality professional development for the staff tailored to the needs of the children, and support for parents.
- The process of school development planning and self-evaluation is well-embedded in the nursery school. It is based on regular consultation with children, parents, staff and governors and promotes continued improvement in the provision.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

CONCLUSION

8. Overall effectiveness

Belmont Nursery School has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The ETI will monitor how the nursery school sustains improvement.

Information on sessions and staff

Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
8:50am – 1:15pm	8:50am – 11:15am	12:15pm – 2:45pm

Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	8	2
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	4	2
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	1	1
New appointments within the previous 12 months	1	2

Number of: *	
Students	1
Trainees	0

Source: data provided by the setting.

* Total placements since September of current year

Inspection method and evidence base

The effective practice and self-evaluation questions which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school settings, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *The Pre-school Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework* at: <https://www.eti.gov.uk/publications/inspection-and-self-evaluation-framework-isef-effective-practice-and-self-evaluation>

Inspectors observed learning and teaching through play, the children's achievements, progression and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, and held formal and informal discussions with staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with those involved with leadership and management, including the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on Leadership and management:

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

Overall effectiveness

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

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

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