

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Glenarm Community Pre-school,
Ballymena, County Antrim

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in
May 2018



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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1. Context

Glenarm Community Pre-School operates within the Orange Hall in Glenarm village. The children come from the village and surrounding rural area; the number in their immediate pre-school year fluctuates.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	20
Under 3 years of age*	13
Funded by Department of Education	7
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	88.1%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

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

Eighty-five percent of parents and all staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were very positive about all aspects of the life and work of the pre-school. In particular, the parents highlighted the welcoming and helpful staff; the continuous focus on their children's well-being and progress; and, the regular opportunities for the children to learn outdoors in the local community. The staff commented on the dedicated teamwork and mutual support within the pre-school to bring about improvements in the provision and the valuable, productive links with the local community. A summary of the responses was shared with the leader and a representative of the management committee.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all learners, 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	Very good
Quality of provision	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children settle quickly and respond enthusiastically to the staff's expectations; they are comfortable with the regular routines and select and use carefully the resources they need. Most of the children's independence is developing well. They are friendly and polite, most approach one another and adults with ease.
- The children's understanding of early mathematical concepts including shape, number and measuring and their interest in books, stories and rhymes are very good. Most of the children understand that print carries interesting messages and information; they respond positively to the ways in which the staff record and display what they say about aspects of their learning, alongside their own early mark-making. They join in enthusiastically in engaging role plays and ask and answer questions confidently in relation to their play.
- The children engage with high levels of curiosity in the carefully planned and imaginatively presented activities; they carry out interesting investigations which help them to develop their understanding of topics, such as, growing plants, looking for colours in the village, baking and recycling leftovers. The children's developing creativity is evident through their bright representational artwork and enjoyment of music-making and songs.
- All of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, are making very good progress across the six learning areas.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff present an attractive well-organised learning environment, making effective use of the available space and introducing additional resources to enrich the children's learning experiences. They arrange interesting and engaging learning activities in the village, on the beach and in Glenarm Castle and grounds, to extend the children's learning beyond the setting.
- The quality of the staff interactions is consistently very good. The staff are skilful in helping the children to connect their learning and in making the most of opportunities for further learning as they occur. The adults model positive play and social behaviours and frame questions to extend the children's thinking and build their language and problem solving skills.
- The children who require additional support are identified and supported appropriately. The staff take careful account of the guidance from outside agencies involved with the children and evaluate systematically and accurately the impact of the well-constructed individual education plans on the children's progress and development.
- The indoor planning is appropriately informative and detailed; the consistently high quality observation and assessment of the children's responses inform well the future planning; there is progression and challenge to reflect the children's interests and to meet their individual needs and stages of development. The staff have identified appropriately the need to develop the outdoor planning to the same quality.

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on the children's learning and well-being. The staff place a particular emphasis on the children's personal, social and emotional development, for example, through the 'Thoughts on Pre-school' letter which the children compose with their key-workers for their parents and helping the children to understand and express their feelings and emotions through colours.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader shares a clear vision and commitment to improving the provision and the children's outcomes; the positive team approach within the pre-school makes effective use of the staff's complimentary skills and talents. The staff team is well-supported in their work by the dedicated management committee. The pre-school's well-embedded approaches to self-evaluation, development planning and continuous professional development lead to improvement in all areas of the provision.
- There are effective working links and positive communication with the parents, who are very supportive of the work of the pre-school. The pre-school's valuable and productive partnerships, for example, with the feeder primary schools, the local community, including businesses and various support agencies are a particular strength in the provision and benefit the children considerably.
- The pre-school has a positive shared education partnership with the foundation stage class in the neighbouring primary school; this arrangement benefits and extends many aspects of the children's learning and all-round development.
- An early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation supports effectively the pre-school's work; the open and high-quality working relationships bring about continuous improvement in the provision for the children.

8. Safeguarding

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the relevant Departments.

9. Overall effectiveness

Glenarm Community Pre-school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The ETI will monitor how the pre-school sustains improvement.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website <https://www.etini.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 chairperson of the management group and the early years specialist; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

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:

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 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.
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.
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.
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.

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