

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Glenravel Community
Playgroup, Cargan, Co Antrim

Report of an Inspection in
December 2014

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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school centres, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI's publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#)

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

The arrangements for this inspection included:

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

The staff (60%) and parents (17%) who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup, including the caring, approachable staff and the stimulating range of learning experiences provided for their children.

2. Context

Glenravel Community Playgroup operates in a dedicated playroom space in the Glenravel Community Complex near Glenravel, County Antrim. The children attend from within a 5 mile radius of the playgroup.

3. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards;
- the quality of provision; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall findings

Overall Performance Level	Very good
Achievements and Standards	Very good
Provision	Very good
Leadership and Management	Very good

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and Standards

- The children are relaxed and confident. They are highly motivated, settle eagerly to their play activities and take high levels of responsibility for many aspects of their learning and regular routines. For example, most of the children select independently and use creatively the appealing range of natural and manmade resources on offer. The children's behaviour is very good; they respond very well to the standards the adults set to develop their early understanding of good listening, sharing their play resources and taking turns.
- The children are making very good progress across all aspects of the pre-school curriculum and there is clear evidence of progression in their learning. Particular strengths include the development of their early mathematical understanding and concept awareness and the well-advanced stage of their representational artwork. Most of the children are progressing well in their developing language and can explain their thinking and ideas in extended sentences using a broad range of vocabulary. They are very interested in browsing books and other print resources and take pleasure in stories.
- The children move freely amongst the various play areas. They play well independently and a majority are beginning to play well with others for prolonged periods, engrossed fully in their chosen activities. The children are gaining familiarity with, and respond well to, their regular routines such as helping to organise the snack time and knowing how to manage important aspects of their personal care.

6. Provision

- The staff create a stimulating and well-organised learning environment, which reflects well the children's interests and promotes and extends their growing independence. They take careful account of the children's individual needs and stages of development in planning the programme to provide high quality learning experiences which engage the children's curiosity and purposeful opportunities for them to investigate and try out their ideas.
- The consistently high quality of the staff's interactions with the children is a key strength of the provision. The adults value what the children say and enjoy talking and listening to them about their learning and extending their thinking and vocabulary. Consequently, many of the children give expanded responses to explain their ideas and feelings.
- The planned programme is comprehensive and contains effective progression and balance across almost all aspects of the pre-school curriculum. Appropriately, the staff have identified the need to develop further the outdoor learning.
- There is an effective system in place for observing, assessing and recording the children's progress. The staff reflect carefully on the quality of the children's responses to inform the future planning to enable each child to reach their full potential.

- Pastoral care in the playgroup is very good. There are very positive and warm working relationships at all levels and an inclusive and nurturing ethos where every child is cherished. The adults engage enthusiastically with the children in their free play activities.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to developing the children's early understanding of healthy lifestyles; the children are provided with healthy snack choices and regular physical activities to develop their agility and co-ordination.

7. Leadership and management

- The complementary skills of the leader and deputy leader set a very positive tone for the work of the playgroup and they articulate well how the leadership and management plan for bringing about continuous improvement in the provision. They collaborate effectively with the rest of the skilful staff team in developing further all aspects of the children's learning.
- There are effective, systematic processes in place to evaluate the provision and to inform and implement a suitable range of improvement actions. It is appropriate that the staff are becoming more reflective in taking account of the impact of the improvement work on the overall quality of the provision.
- The playgroup is a highly-valued resource in the local community and the proactive, dedicated support given by the management committee and the parents contributes significantly to the life and work of the playgroup.
- The playgroup has built up a wide range of links and partnerships with the parents, the community and various external agencies to support and extend the staff's work with the children. The parents are welcomed and are given comprehensive information about the provision. Most of the children transfer to two local primary schools and relevant information about the children's progress is provided to the year one teacher, supporting effective transitional arrangements from pre-school to year one.
- The early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation provides effective, tailored support to develop the provision.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. 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 children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	17	18
in their immediate pre-school year	17	18
funded by Department of Education (DE)	17	18
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2		
with a statement of special educational needs	0	0
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	0
with English as an additional language	0	0
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	0
Attendance:		
attendance* of funded children for the previous school year	90%	

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	2
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	2
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	2

*** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session
2½ hours	2½ hours

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