

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Grove Community Playgroup,
Lisburn, County Antrim

Voluntary pre-school

Report of an Inspection in
May 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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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Grove Community Playgroup is located in Grove Community Centre in Lisburn providing pre-school places for twelve children from the local area. Since the time of the last inspection there have been significant changes in staffing. A new leader took up post in January 2017 and is due to leave in June 2017. Since September 2016 there have been a number of changes in support staff. The accommodation is in a large community hall which needs to be set up and cleared away on a daily basis; the playgroup has access to a secure and safe outdoor area, with toilet provision in a public area outside the playgroup. The management committee, whose members are new in the current year, is currently searching for new accommodation.

Number of children:	Part-time
Attending part-time	12
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	12
With statement of special educational needs	#
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0
With English as an additional language	#
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100
Average attendance for the previous year.	N/A
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

N/A not available

2. Views of parents and staff

There was very little response to a confidential parental questionnaire. In written comment, a concern was raised about the quality of the provision which was shared with the leader and management group representative. All of the staff responded positively to most of the questions.

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	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Requires urgent improvement
Quality of provision	Requires urgent improvement
Leadership and management	Requires urgent improvement

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The outcomes for children are unsatisfactory across all the areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- Given the time of year, the children are not making sufficient progress. The children's play and progress is not sufficiently developed for their expected age and stage.
- Those children identified as having specific additional needs are not supported sufficiently to make adequate progress in their learning and development.

6. Quality of provision

The quality of provision requires urgent improvement.

- The staff interaction to promote learning is not sufficiently effective to support the children in their learning; staff expectations of the children are not sufficiently high across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- Planning, assessment and record-keeping are not well enough developed, including through the work of the staff as a team. The planning does not guide them in their day to day work with the children to effect progress in learning; the records of the children's achievements do not provide the parents with accurate information on their children's development.
- The pre-school setting, in a partitioned area of a sports hall, is unattractive and does not provide a stimulating learning environment. There are limited resources, equipment and furniture available to provide opportunities for the children to develop their curiosity, engagement and concentration in the play activities. The presentation and storage of equipment and resources does not promote the children's independence, free choice or progression in their learning. While the group has access to a safe, enclosed outdoor area this space is under-utilised for outdoor play.
- The high number of adults present, and the relatively low-level nature of their interaction with the children, is not conducive to developing the ability of the children to work on their own, in pairs and in small groups.

- The provision for children who require additional support with aspects of their learning requires improvement; individual education plans have been developed too late in the year to have guided the children's learning effectively.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to the care and welfare of the children is good and impacts positively; the children are at ease with the caring staff.

7. Leadership and management

- The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement requires urgent improvement.
- There is no development plan, action plan, base-line or related evaluation of the provision other than that provided recently as a result of an inspection by the South Eastern Health and Social Service Trust and by the Early Years Specialist both of which identify a significant range of aspects requiring improvement. The staff will require more well-focused guidance and expertise with regular in-house support to bring about the necessary fundamental improvements.
- The lack of systematic self-evaluation, action planning and evaluation has led to significant deterioration in the quality of the provision since the previous inspection in 2011.
- The role of the management group is at an early stage of development. Their role requires further improvement in terms of strategic planning and engagement to improve provision through better accommodation, improved resourcing and time for effective development planning and evaluation.
- The playgroup is developing its links with SureStart, the local primary schools and special school to support the transition of the children to, and from, pre-school. There has been a poor response from parents to opportunities to visit and engage with the playgroup.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the relevant Departments. However, Grove Community playgroup needs to:
 - secure and improve the environment of the playgroup setting; and
 - ensure that all relevant training is up to date for members of the management committee.

CONCLUSION

8. Overall effectiveness

Grove Community playgroup needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires more focused external support to do so.

The areas for improvement are:

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

The ETI will monitor and report on the playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 18 to 24 months.

Health and Safety

1. With access to running water being available only outside the playroom, the use of a single bowl of water for all children to wash their hands in is unhygienic.
2. There is a need for a risk assessment of the appropriateness of the play equipment for the age and stage of the children.
3. There needs to be awareness that equipment can provide a trip risk when adults are collecting children.
4. The security of the door to the playgroup, while a door-bell has been added recently, remains insecure.

Information on sessions and staff

Duration of sessions

Part-time: am
9.30 – 12.00

Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	2	3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	2	3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within the previous 12 months	1	2

Number of: *	
Students	0
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 Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework: Effective practice and self-evaluation questions for pre-school*.

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 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 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 the 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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