

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Hollybank Pre-school Centre,
Monkstown, County Antrim

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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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Hollybank Pre-school is located in a classroom within Hollybank Primary School in Monkstown, Newtownabbey. The pre-school operates one part-time morning session.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	21
Funded by Department of Education	19
With statement of special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average attendance for the previous year.	89.5%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

Source: data provided by the setting.

** 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

The few responses from the parents and staff to an online questionnaire were very positive about all aspects of the provision.

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	Capacity to bring about Improvement.
Outcomes for learners	Very Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are eager to learn; they spend sustained periods engaging in concentrated and productive play. They choose activities independently, take responsibility for labelling their own work and help in the preparation of the snack routine. They collaborate well to extend their own ideas; their social skills are developing very well.
- The children have a very high level of interest in books and hold sustained conversations with the staff and each other. They are beginning to show an interest in print and mark making and use mathematical language as an integral part of their play and when participating enthusiastically in group rhymes and stories.
- The children use creative materials to make simple 3D models and early representations of people and objects. They investigate, using their senses and with great interest, the range of natural and real items incorporated into their play activities. Their fine motor skills are developing well and they are gaining good coordination and spatial awareness as they engage in outdoor physical play.
- The children who require additional support with their learning are accessing the curriculum with increasing confidence and making steady progress with appropriate adult support.

6. Quality of provision

- Although the classroom has limitations in the amount of space available, the staff are developing richly-resourced play areas and they rotate activities through the session to provide a wide range of interesting experiences. They are working in conjunction with the primary school to develop further the spacious outdoor learning environment.
- The interactions between the staff and the children are of a high quality. The staff are respectful and supportive of the children's own ideas, and implement effectively a range of strategies to encourage their attention and regulate behaviours. They model an extensive vocabulary including mathematical language, refer to books frequently, promote thinking skills and encourage close observation and investigation.
- The detailed weekly planning is understood and implemented effectively by the staff team. They take regular observations of the children's responses to play and use this information to identify children with specific additional needs and to report to parents.
- The use of the planning and assessment methods to tailor the programme to the needs and interests of individual children is less well developed and has been appropriately identified as an area of priority in the current action plan. The opportunities for children to use a wide range of construction materials are not sufficiently frequent and the transitions points in the daily routine are not managed well enough.

- The staff are developing well individual plans and implementing strategies to support children with additional needs, liaising with the parents and engaging appropriately with a range of other professionals.
- The care and welfare of the children is of a high quality. The staff provide a nurturing environment which enables the children to respond well. They foster a healthy lifestyle through the healthy fruit break and the regular energetic play.

7. Leadership and management

- The new leadership fosters a strong team approach among the playgroup staff. The leadership and management group are developing an increasingly collegial approach to improvement. The independent early years specialist guidance and support is very effective and is highly valued by the staff.
- Overall, there is scope to improve progression in learning and experiences across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. However, the approach to development planning, self-evaluation and associated staff training is also progressing well and is having a positive impact on improving the quality of the provision and outcomes for the children.
- The management committee is kept informed about developments in the pre-school; the addition of a representative from the primary school promotes a closer working relationship and sharing of resources and expertise.
- The close links with the local primary school to which most of the children transfer contribute well to smooth transition for the children into year one and their progression in learning experiences.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children which reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

CONCLUSION

8. Overall effectiveness

Hollybank Pre-school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. There are areas for improvement that the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The key areas for improvement are to:

- tailor the programme to the needs and interests of individual children through the further development and use of planning and assessment;
- ensure suitable progression in learning and experiences across all areas of the pre-school curriculum; and
- embed and sustain the improvements to date.

The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

Information on sessions and staff

Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	8:50-11:30	0

Details of staff

Number of:	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3

Source: data provided by the setting,
fewer than 5

Inspection method and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website www.etini.gov.uk.

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 Outcomes for learners, on Quality of Provision 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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