

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Little Rays Day Nursery, Moira,
County Down

Report of an inspection in
November 2015

eti

*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 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 continue to 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 continue to 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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1. Inspection method and evidence base

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

Inspectors observed learning and teaching 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, including the proprietor; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

A small number of parents and staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The responses were positive about the life and work of the playgroup.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all children, the purpose of inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to evaluate the:

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

3. Context

Little Rays Day Nursery in Moira accommodates a part-time playgroup session for twelve children, all of whom are in their pre-school year. The total number of children in the session on any given day, however, fluctuates depending on the number of additional under-age children who join the session. The leader has been in post from the pre-school provision was established in September 2012.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are well settled and almost all display very good levels of independence and self-management. Almost all of the children sustain purposeful play, of a collaborative and solitary nature, and are beginning to form friendships with each other.
- The children are developing well their understanding of key mathematical concepts and associated language, particularly in shape, measures, early number and positional language, through a range of stimulating play opportunities indoors and outdoors.
- Almost all of the children are developing appropriate language and communication skills. They engage enthusiastically in role-play, listen attentively and contribute to the whole-group story session and are confident to talk about their play with each other and with adults.
- The children's fine motor skills are well developed as they engage in sorting, hammering, moulding, creative artwork and early writing activities. The children are confident to explore and experiment with the range of natural materials and tools available to them and select independently the resource that they require for play.

6. Provision for learning

- The staff have created a stimulating, attractive and well-resourced learning environment. The ease of access to the resources provides appropriate opportunities for the children to develop their creativity, independence and self-management skills. The children's artwork is valued and displayed attractively around the room.
- The daily routine is well embedded and the timetable provides an appropriate balance between free play and the more adult-led activities. The snack routine and all transitions between the activities are developed very effectively and provide very good learning opportunities across the curriculum.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is of a consistently high standard. The staff extend further the children's thinking skills and vocabulary through skilfully modelling key language and effective questioning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The staff treat the children and each other with care and respect and have created an inclusive and supportive environment.
- The staff are reflective practitioners who have developed an effective system of observations, assessment and planning and evaluate their practice on an ongoing basis. It is important that management ensures staff have sufficient time to continue to develop the cycle of observations, assessment and planning in order to ensure that the provision continues to meet the needs of all the children.

- The provision for special educational needs is very good. There is a detailed and systematic approach to observations and record keeping which informs future planning and ensures a range of appropriate strategies and interventions are in place to meet the specific needs of all the children.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader of the playgroup has worked hard to establish an appropriate system of planning for improvement, and has devised a three-year development plan which is supported by appropriate action plans. She is a very effective role model and is supported well by her staff in all areas of the life and work of the playgroup. The leader and her staff do not however have sufficient time to plan together and to embed fully the system of self-evaluation leading to improvement. There is a good culture of continuing professional development among the team and all of the staff have completed a number of additional training courses to keep abreast of developments in early years practices and to improve further the provision in the playgroup.
- There are good links with the parents who are kept informed about their children's progress, and the life and work of the playgroup, through an informative monthly newsletter, regular information leaflets and meetings.
- The early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation has made a very good contribution to the overall development of the provision in this playgroup.
- 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 reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Overall effectiveness

The playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON LITTLE RAYS DAY NURSERY PLAYGROUP

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Attending full-time	0		
Attending part-time	17		
Under 3 years of age*	0		
Funded by Department of Education	12		
With statement of special educational needs	1		
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0		
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0		
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0		
With English as an additional language	0		
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	1		

* On 1 July.

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

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

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	2.5 hours	

3. Details of staff

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

Number of: ***	
Students	
Trainees	

*** Total placements since September of current year

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