

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Magilligan Community
Playgroup, Co Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in
March 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

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.

Forty-four percent of the parents and all staff returned the questionnaires. All of the returns from the questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with the work of the playgroup.

2. Context

Magilligan Community Playgroup is situated in the village of Magilligan, County Londonderry in purpose-built accommodation. At the time of the inspection, there were 18 children enrolled in the playgroup. The children come from a very wide catchment area.

3. Focus of 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 very well-settled, highly motivated and happy to talk about their learning. They make creative use of the learning resources; for example, they can access and store the resources independently and demonstrate a growing sense of responsibility for their learning environment. Most of the children play together co-operatively, taking increasing account of the needs and interests of others. During the inspection, there were many examples of sustained purposeful play.
- There are very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum; the development of the children's personal, social and emotional development, language and communication skills and their understanding of early mathematical concepts are particular strengths. The children use effectively the resource books provided in the areas of play and they listen attentively and join in appropriately during group story-time. The availability of an appropriate range of writing tools and materials encourages the children to develop their experimental writing skills; a few children are beginning to write their own names. As a result of the staff using appropriate mathematical language while participating in the children's play, they develop the children's understanding of size, shape, weight, capacity and positional language. Many of the children demonstrate a good understanding of early mathematical concepts. The children's representational drawings and paintings show good attention to detail.

6. Provision

- There is a welcoming ethos within the playgroup. The staff work hard on a daily basis to create a bright, clean and stimulating learning environment for the children both indoors and outside. The attractively presented and well organised playroom provides very good opportunities for learning in all aspects of the pre-school curriculum.
- During the inspection, there were very good examples of the staff interacting skilfully with the children to extend their language and thinking skills. A particular strength is the emphasis placed on the development of early mathematical concepts. The staff engage meaningfully in the play activities, they value the children's opinions and build effectively on their ideas and they make very effective use of the small group sessions to consolidate and extend the children's learning.
- The written planning indicates that the children learn from a good variety of stimulating activities and learning experiences in all areas of the pre-school curriculum throughout the year. The staff are making increasing use of their observations to assess the children's progress, to identify their individual needs and to inform their interactions with them.
- There are very good links with the parents and they are kept well informed about events within the playgroup through the parents' information board and an informative newsletter. It is appropriate that the parents receive information about their child's progress regularly throughout the year.

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the playgroup is very good. This is evidenced through the staff's ongoing response to the children's interests and needs, the caring atmosphere and the promotion of safe play in the wider environment.

7. Leadership and management

- A high priority has been given to developing high quality working relationships; all of the staff work as part of an effective professional team. The leader is well-organised, enthusiastic and committed to the ongoing development of the playgroup in the best interests of the children and the community.
- The staff are developing an effective culture of reflection and self-evaluation to promote improvement as an integral element of the staff's practice. The playgroup's management committee employs an early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation; she provides very good support and works effectively with the staff to develop aspects of the playgroup's provision.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding the children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.
- The playgroup gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity; for example, the children have access to a healthy snack and regular opportunities for physical play.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of the 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 MAGILLIGAN COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	18	
in their immediate pre-school year	18	
funded by Department of Education (DE)	18	
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	18	
with a statement of special educational needs	0	
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	3	
with English as an additional language	0	
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	1	

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

Attendance** of funded children for the previous school year.	92.5%
Number of days open in previous school year	188

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session
2½ hours	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader		5
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		5
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		0
New appointments within previous 12 months		1

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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