

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Portglenone Community  
Playgroup, County Antrim

Report of an inspection in  
May 2016

*eti*

The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

**Providing Inspection Services for:**

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
Department for Communities



## 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 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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## 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; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete confidential questionnaires.

The responses to the confidential questionnaire by the parents were very positive. In particular, they highlighted their appreciation of the caring and supportive staff, the progress being made by their children and the importance of the facility within the local community. The staff responses to the questionnaire were also very positive about the provision.

## 2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest 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

Portglenone Community Playgroup is accommodated in the Portglenone Community Centre beside the marina in Portglenone. At the time of the inspection, the playgroup was operating in temporary facilities while their usual playroom was being refurbished. The playgroup make use of the adjoining play park to provide energetic physical play and have future plans to develop a further outdoor learning area near to the community centre.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

## **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children are well settled, developing well their social skills and understand and follow the daily routines with confidence. A majority of the children spend sustained periods concentrating, persevering and enjoying the range of activities.
- The children make independent use of the creative area and painting easel to explore colour and texture and make simple models and early representations of people and objects in their surroundings.
- The children respond well to books and stories, songs and rhymes in smaller groups and during whole group sessions. They listen attentively and engage in conversations about the character and storyline. A majority of the children have an understanding of simple mathematical language and concepts; they count, make comparisons and explore three-dimensional shapes through their use of play materials and their daily snack routine.
- The children are curious and sustained in their interest of natural materials as they investigate the flow of the sand in the sand tray and the texture of the real materials in the water tray.
- The children's self-initiated, imaginative role-play and experimental writing is less well developed. The younger children, in their penultimate school year, are well settled and are developing confidence to explore the areas of play. The children identified with specific additional needs are supported effectively to integrate and are making progress to meet their targets.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The staff set up, on a daily basis, a stimulating and attractive learning environment within the space available. There are caring and supportive working relationships between the staff and the children. In the most effective practice, the staff model a rich vocabulary, integrate early mathematical language into play, encourage close observation and sustained discussion and extend the children's thinking and learning. This high quality interaction needs to be implemented consistently by all of the staff in order to raise further the quality of the children's learning.
- The planned programme informs a broad and interesting pre-school programme covering all areas of the pre-school curriculum. There is, however, insufficient record keeping of the staff's evaluations of the learning and lack of detail to guide them on the specific language and learning within specific areas of play including outdoor play. The staff make relevant observations and assessments of the children's responses and progress. This information is used to identify any need for early intervention and to report to the parents on a termly basis. They need to make more use of this information to match more fully the progression in learning to the wide range of individual needs and interests of the children.
- The children with additional needs are well integrated and supported appropriately to access the curriculum. The staff have benefited from the training provided by the Education Authority; it is being implemented effectively to guide the support of individual children. There is effective liaison with parents, and other relevant professionals to ensure a partnership approach to the support.

- The quality of pastoral care is very good. There is a caring and inclusive ethos within the playgroup. The staff report there are effective working relationships at all levels.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The children are provided with a fruit break and learn about their dental health and healthy bodies through the planned curriculum. They have regular opportunities to participate in energetic physical play.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leader and deputy leader are good role models in their interactions with the children and promote a team approach to the work. The recent audits of aspects of the provision and consultation with the parents have encouraged a reflective approach and the identification of strengths and priority areas for further development. There is evidence of ongoing improvements since the last inspection in, for example, the provision and record keeping for special educational needs. The staff, committee and early years specialist need to work together to develop clearer action plans to guide the development work. They should be connected closely to relevant staff development and show a direct link between the focus of improvement and the outcomes in the children's learning.
- There is effective communication between the parents and playgroup through the provision of documentation and regular meetings. Parents' contributions and involvement are valued and encouraged by the staff and management committee. There are suitable links with the local feeder primary schools to exchange information and promote a smooth transition from pre-school to year one.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has satisfactory comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The following areas need to be addressed:
  - ensure the documentation for the intimate care procedures and promoting positive behaviour are more fully aligned to the practice; and
  - provide further relevant detail in the policy for child protection.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

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

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON PORTGLENONE COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP, PORTGLENONE

### 1. Details of children

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>
Attending full-time	17
Attending part-time	10
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	17
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	1
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	1
With English as an additional language	0
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0

\* 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

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
	09:15-12:00	

### 3. Details of staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	5	
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	4	
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		
New appointments within the previous 12 months	2	

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	
Trainees	

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

**Accommodation**

1. The community centre is a shared facility and, as a result, the staff are required to set out and clear equipment on a daily basis.
2. Storage space is limited.



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