

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Primrose Hill Day Nursery's
Playgroup, Ballyclare, County
Antrim

Report of an Inspection in
March 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 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.

Forty-three percent of parents responded to the online confidential questionnaire. The majority of parents indicated satisfaction with the staff's work in the playgroup. All of the findings from the questionnaire were shared and discussed with the representatives from the management committee and the staff.

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

Primrose Hill Day Nursery's Playgroup is situated in a purpose built unit within Primrose Hill Day Nursery, situated on the outskirts of Ballyclare. The majority of the children come from the Ballyclare area. At the time of the inspection, 14 pre-school children were attending the playgroup.

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 and are secure in the routines of the day. They engage in concentrated purposeful play of both a solitary and collaborative nature. The children are developing well their independence, for example, through the snack routine and making free choices at play. The children need more opportunities to develop further their thinking and problem solving skills.
- All the children display very good attention at the group story session and discuss the story and the characters with enthusiasm. They have a keen interest in early mark making and a small number of children access independently books during free play. When the staff encourage the children, they use early mathematical language to count and talk about colour, measurement and shape as part of their play. The staff need to develop further the children's mathematical understanding.
- The children demonstrate a particular interest in the arts. They engage in sustained role-play and their careful observations enable them to represent their own ideas through creative drawings and pictures using a range of media. The children enjoy the opportunities provided to make and respond to music and participate fully in the rhyme and song session.

6. Provision for learning

- The indoor learning environment is bright and stimulating. The resources are well organised and easily accessible to the children. The children's work is valued and displayed well throughout the playroom. The outdoor environment has been identified appropriately by the staff as an area requiring further development.
- The quality of the staff interactions with the children are of a good quality. In the best practice, the staff model play, encourage the children's independence and extend their language as they engage with them through the play.
- The planning for the pre-school curriculum is thorough and robust and guides effectively the work of the staff with the children. The staff have developed a systematic approach to observing, recording and assessing the children's progress which is used well to inform planning. The staff need to plan for the development of the children's independent thinking skills and to maximise incidental learning opportunities arising from the children's interests.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. A welcoming, positive, respectful ethos permeates the work of the playgroup. The staff know the children well and respond with care to their needs and interests.
- The staff give very good attention to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle through the provision of healthy snacks. There are regular opportunities provided for outdoor play.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader has a clear vision for the continued development of the playgroup. She is a good role model in her work with the children and is well-supported by the playgroup assistants. There is an appropriate development plan and the staff are beginning to develop action plans to promote improvement in the pre-school programme. The management committee need to review arrangements to ensure adequate time is available to allow staff to plan and evaluate collaboratively their work.
- The playgroup has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The following area needs to be addressed:
 - the safeguarding and pastoral care policies require review to ensure they reflect the specific needs of the playgroup.
- The independent early years specialist has been working with the staff since September. She provides good levels of support to the staff and encourages a reflective approach to their work, for example, in developing aspects of self-evaluation and planning.
- Good links have been established with the parents through the induction meetings, monthly newsletters and relevant information on the parents' notice board.

8. Overall effectiveness

Primrose Hill Day Nursery's 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, in particular, the need to ensure that the staff make better use of the planning to improve further the quality of their interactions with the children.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON PRIMROSE HILL DAY NURSERY'S PLAYGROUP

1. Details of children

| Number of children: | Class 1 |
|---|---------|
| Attending full-time | |
| Attending part-time | 21 |
| Under 3 years of age* | |
| Funded by Department of Education | 14 |
| With statement of special educational needs | |
| Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs | 2 |
| At CoP stages 3 or 4** | |
| At CoP stages 1 or 2** | |
| With English as an additional language | |
| Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school | |

* 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. | 66 |
| Average attendance for the previous year. | 95% |
| Number of days open in previous school year | 190 |

2. Duration of sessions

| Full-time | Part-time: am | Part-time: pm |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| - | 09:00-11.30 | - |

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 | | 2 |

| Number of: *** | |
|----------------|--|
| Students | |
| Trainees | |

*** Total placements since September of current year

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