

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Rainbow Corner Playgroup,  
Moira, County Down

Report of an Inspection in  
June 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 playgroup:

The playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.
The playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.
The 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 playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The 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 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 confidential questionnaires.

Almost all of the staff responded to the confidential, online questionnaire. Overall, the responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the provision. A small number of the parents responded to the questionnaire and all were highly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup.

## 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

Rainbow Corner Playgroup is located in rented accommodation in Deramore Rehabilitation Centre in the town of Moira. There is access to a spacious enclosed outdoor play area. The staff are in post since the last inspection in 2008.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

## **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children sustain purposeful, settled and purposeful play for lengthy periods of time. Their self-initiated play is amicable and collaborative; they take turns and, share ideas and the resources. The children are confident to organise their play, make suggestions to the staff and are readily making choices which indicate that they are secure and familiar with the wide range of materials in the playgroup. The children have high levels of self-regulation and their behaviour is excellent.
- The children are developing appropriate speech and language skills and they have very good levels of concentration. They engage well with the staff and are confident to answer questions, however, the children are not given sufficient time to sequence their ideas and recall events or stories. They apply and use mathematical language to convey an appropriate understanding of number, size and shape concepts.
- The children show an enthusiasm for the observation and care of plants and mini-beasts and dig energetically in the soil. Caring for the plants and small creatures is developing effectively the children's awareness of the 'World Around Us'. The children's fine motor skills are well developed; they draw, paint pictures and use scissors competently. During the inspection, the groups of children observed, displayed high levels of competence in gross motor physical and body management skills.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- There is a comprehensive planned programme for the children which includes all areas of the pre-school curriculum. A recent focus of development has been the planning for the provision of stimulating activities in the outdoor area. During the inspection, there were a few missed opportunities to utilise the potential of the activities to challenge and extend connected learning. The link between the assessment and the planning is underdeveloped and requires further development in order to meet all the children's individual needs and interests.
- An attractive learning environment with authentic resources enriches the children's broad and balanced learning experiences and encourages high levels of exploration, investigation and sensory learning. The recent addition of a stimulating outdoor play area extends the children's opportunities for physical development and scientific awareness of growing and caring for plants. The organisation of the day provides for lengthy periods of freely chosen play and includes an effective snack routine and activities led by the staff. Aspects of the story session are overly directed by the adults and require further development to engage all of the children in communicating their understanding of the story.
- There are many instances of good to very good interaction of the staff with the children which promotes effectively their language development and learning. The children are encouraged to ask questions and to make suggestions for their play. The use of junk materials and real fruit and mini-beasts stimulates the children's motivation to explore and experiment.

- The staff have established effective links and engaged in professional development programmes to help the children improve their language skills. The staff implement effectively a good range of strategies to support the children identified with additional needs.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. The safe and calm atmosphere in the playgroup creates a nurturing environment wherein all can thrive. There is a warm, welcoming ethos and very good working relationships between the children, the staff and the parents. The staff know the children well and respond with care to their needs and interests.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity; the children prepare fruit salad for the snack, enjoy healthy foods and participate in a varied range of energetic physical activities.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The playgroup leader and staff work effectively as a team and have invested significant time in the development of the stimulating outdoor area. While the planning and assessment of the pre-school programme and the use of self-evaluation to inform the priorities for improvement are insufficiently developed, these are aspects which the staff are taking further with the help of a recently-appointed early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation.
- The staff have developed effective links with the parents through, for example, regular informative newsletters and information sessions.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding. The arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments; however, the staff and management committee training needs to be updated.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

Rainbow Corner playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The main area for improvement is to develop further planning, assessment and self-evaluation processes leading to improvement.

The ETI will continue to monitor how the pre-school sustains improvement.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON RAINBOW CORNER PLAYGROUP, MOIRA.

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	0
Attending part-time	22
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	22
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	*
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	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.	53%
Average attendance for the previous year.	92%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	3 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	0	

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

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

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