

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Rascals Playstation, Ballinamallard,  
County Fermanagh

Voluntary playgroup

Report of an Inspection in  
May 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



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## 1. Context

Rascals Playstation Playgroup is located in a purpose-built room in a day care setting in Ballinamallard town. The setting has its own pre-school outdoor area. The leader is in post since the last inspection in June 2011 and the acting deputy leader is newly appointed. The playgroup re-entered the pre-school programme in September 2107 following a year of being unable to fill the minimum quota of pre-school places in 2016-2017.

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending part-time	8
Funded by Department of Education	8
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	N/A
Number of days open in previous school year	N/A

**Source:** data provided by the setting.

\* On 1 July.

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

# fewer than 5

## 2. Views of parents and staff

A majority (60%) of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The parental responses were positive about the children's learning experiences and included a small number of written comments that praised the work of the staff and the information provided about safeguarding and procedural matters. The staff responses were wholly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. All of the responses have been shared with the leadership and management.

## 3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all learners, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- outcomes for the children;
- quality of provision for learning; and
- leadership and management.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Significant areas for improvement
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Quality of provision</b>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Requiring significant improvement

## **5. Outcomes for learners**

- The outcomes for the children are variable across the curriculum. While some aspects are good there are areas for improvement in most areas of the pre-school curriculum. The children's personal and social development is restricted due to the small number of the pre-school children being enrolled in the composite group alongside children in their penultimate pre-school year. As a result, the quality of the pre-school children's collaborative play is too low level for the time of year and their stages of development.
- A majority of the children lack independence and are over reliant on the adults to help them to sustain concentrated and productive play. The children are well behaved and, when reminded by the adults, are able to follow instructions and routines.
- The children have a good interest in the world around them and care for the plants and vegetables in the outdoor area. Through role play, the children can engage in roles as shopkeepers and enjoy handling money during shopping activities. Mathematical language is mostly focused on counting and naming shapes and the children have acquired good counting, sorting and matching skills.
- The children's use of language across the curriculum is underdeveloped. While a majority of the children have an interest in books, they have a limited repertoire of rhymes and songs in general and in particular for enhancing their mathematical learning. Most of the children's drawing and representational artwork observed during the inspection, and on display and in their personal folders shows insufficient progress from the start of the year to the third term in pre-school.
- The children who require support with aspects of their learning are making good progress. They integrate and respond well to the expectations of the staff to play, and can follow the routines of the day.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- The staff have created well defined, spacious and interesting areas for indoor and outdoor play. While, the outdoor area has the potential to promote learning across the curriculum, the learning opportunities are under-utilised for the children's learning. This is an area for development identified in the three year development plan overview which the inspection endorses.
- The staff know the children very well and collate anecdotal observations which they use to inform aspects of the short-term planning. There are missed opportunities to use all of the information about the children's progress and stages of development to ensure more appropriate planning for challenge and progression in all areas of the pre-school curriculum throughout the year. The planning and resources for the underage children are insufficiently differentiated from the pre-school programme.
- The organisation of the day provides for lengthy periods of play. The snack routine promotes effectively the children's mathematical understanding about shape and numbers, and their self-help and social skills.

- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is variable. In the best practice the staff use open-ended questions to help the children to develop their play. There are missed opportunities to assess and respond to the needs of the children as they play, and to build more effectively on their ideas in order to challenge the older children with higher expectations for progress in learning.
- The individual education strategies for those children with additional needs are of a good quality to support the children with their learning. Parents are appropriately kept informed about the staff interventions.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on their learning and development. The staff are supportive and caring and promote the children's self-esteem; relationships with the children are very good.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- Overall, the leadership and management of the playgroup, at all levels, has significant areas for improvement. The processes for self-evaluation are underdeveloped and do not identify clearly enough the relevant priorities for improvement. The development planning process and action plans produced do not outline how the actions to promote improvement will be monitored to measure the impact on the children's progress in learning across the curriculum. In addition, the management committee need to keep the sustainability of the playgroup under review and ensure that the leader and the staff are provided with the necessary training to develop further the effectiveness of their leadership and management skills to provide good or better quality pre-school education.
- Due to staff changes in the early years specialists' from the Early Years Organisation there are gaps and inconsistencies in the records of the support provided and the impact of the advice and guidance was not evident at the time of the inspection. As a result of the inspection, the development plan and actions plans need to be adjusted to bring forward the necessary actions to promote improvement and to have due regard for managing the composite group of underage and pre-school children.
- The playgroup has established effective links with the parents, relevant agencies and the main feeder primary schools for the benefit of the children. Information about the children's progress and development is shared with the parents. As part of a new initiative for shared education, the staff report the benefits to the children of having opportunities to play with children from a neighbouring playgroup and to engage in trips and visits to broaden their learning experiences.

## **8. Safeguarding**

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. However, the staff need to update the safeguarding policies to reflect the most recent guidance and develop further the risk assessments to clarify the roles of the staff and to identify and minimise potential risks.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Rascals Playstation playgroup needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interests of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are:

- to develop further the planning and assessment methods and ensure consistently high quality adult interaction to meet the children's wide range of individual needs;
- to monitor and evaluate the quality of the outcomes for the children and ensure that the provision provides sufficient challenge and progression for the pre-school children; and,
- for the leadership and management, at all levels, to develop self-evaluation, identify the priorities and action plan for improvement in the pre-school curriculum.

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 in 12-18 months.

### Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/inspection-and-self-evaluation-framework-isef-effective-practice-and-self-evaluation>.

Inspectors observed learning and teaching through play, the children's achievements, progression and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, and held formal and informal discussions with staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with those involved with leadership and management, including a representative the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

## Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

### 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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and 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 school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.



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