

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Right Rascals Day Nursery,
Killinchy, Co Down

Report of an Inspection in
April 2015

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*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 settings, 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 or to meet with the inspection team.

The parental responses to the questionnaire indicate high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the educational and pastoral provision provided by the playgroup. In particular, the parents appreciate the happy and safe learning environment and the regular communication through informative newsletters. The responses from the staff were wholly positive highlighting the effective teamwork.

2. Context

The pre-school room is located within the purpose-built premises of Right Rascals Day Nursery. The children attending the playgroup come from the village of Killinchy and surrounding rural 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	Good
Achievements and Standards	Very good
Provision	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are happy and secure in the playgroup environment. Most of the children choose activities independently and engage in sustained periods of purposeful play. They are developing very good social skills and are able to co-operate well with one another and with adults. During the inspection, a small number of children were observed working with each other to problem solve.
- Most of the children are developing well their language and communication skills. They listen attentively during story time and a small number of children were observed retelling stories to their peers. A majority of the children are interested in books; they refer to and incorporate them appropriately in their play. The recent focus on designing and building an outdoor vegetable garden has provided a meaningful context for children to develop further their pre-writing skills. During the inspection, the children showed an interest in early mathematics and were observed counting, sequencing, pattern making and sorting recycled materials.

6. Provision

- The staff work hard to provide a stimulating and well-resourced learning environment. They make good use of the indoor space to create distinct areas of play. The snack routine is used effectively to promote the children's independence and mathematical and social skills. There is a smooth transition between each of the learning activities. However, the staff should improve the organisation at the start of the day in order to increase the children's opportunities for freely chosen play.
- Most of the staff interactions are of a good quality and, on occasions, are very good. The staff make regular observations of the children's responses to the activities and are beginning to use these more effectively to inform the planning. The staff have identified appropriately the need to develop and refine further the planning to ensure that the learning inherent in each activity is fully exploited and takes account of the individual needs of the children.
- The staff have accessed recently relevant training on writing individual education plans. Together, they identify early the children who require additional support and engage in a sensitive and timely manner with parents and external agencies.
- The quality of the pastoral care is very good. This is exemplified by a welcoming ethos, caring and approachable staff and mutual respect among staff and children.
- The playgroup gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating through the provision of a healthy snack. The children would benefit from more regular opportunities to engage in energetic play.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff are committed to the playgroup, work well as a team and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They are beginning to reflect on their practice and a culture of self-evaluation is emerging. While the development plan identifies a number of relevant priorities for improvement, more focus needs to be given to developing the core curriculum.
- The staff have benefitted from consistent support from the independent early years specialist over the last three years. The staff value and act upon the guidance provided to improve further the quality of the children's learning experiences.
- A key strength of the playgroup is the effective links with parents through regular and detailed newsletters and questionnaires. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to liaise with parents in supporting them with their children's learning. There are well-developed links with the local primary school. Frequent visitors to the playgroup and educational trips enhance further the children's learning experiences and develop well the awareness of the world around them.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the playgroup is good. The playgroup has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The key area for improvement is to:

- develop further the planning and observations to meet more fully the individual needs of the children.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor, through district inspection activity, the playgroup's progress on the areas for improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION RIGHT RASCALS DAY NURSERY

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	24	-
in their immediate pre-school year	24	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	24	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	24	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	2	-
with English as an additional language	1	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

Attendance** of funded children for the previous school year.	95.5%
Number of days open in previous school year	191

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session
3 hours	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	3	1
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	1
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	1

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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