

Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



St Caireall's Playgroup, Aghyaran, County Tyrone

Voluntary pre-school playgroup DE Ref No: 2BB-0666

Report of an Inspection in October 2019



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

St Caireall's Playgroup is situated within a converted classroom and resource area of St Caireall's Primary School and has access to a small enclosed outdoor area. It is located in the rural area of Aghyaran on the outskirts of Castlederg. The playgroup entered the funded pre-school programme in 2018. The children come mainly from the local area.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	16
Funded by Department of Education	16
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At Cop stages 1 or 2	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	95%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

Source: data provided by the setting.

fewer than 5

*On 1 July past

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

2. Views of parents and staff

A small number of the parents responded to the questionnaire and all their responses were positive about the life and work of the pre-school. All of the staff completed the staff questionnaire and their responses were highly affirming of the work of the pre-school. A summary of the questionnaire responses was shared with the leadership and a representative of the management committee.

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

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Very Good

5. Outcomes for learners

- All of the children are making good progress for the time of year. The impact of the well-planned settling-in process is that all of the children stay for the full duration of the session.
- The children readily turn to the staff for support on arrival and during play. They are developing very good social skills and freely make choices and decisions about their play. The children engage well in small groups and in pairs to develop imaginative play about familiar people, farming and autumn.
- The children use a range of observational and exploratory skills and concentrate for lengthy periods to investigate using natural materials, the waterwheel and windmills.
- A majority of the children are ready to listen to stories and show an interest in books. The children's early mark making skills are starting to emerge and they are beginning to recognise symbols for their own coat pegs.
- The children can sort and match during table top games and play activities. Mathematical language during incidental play is used appropriately by the children.
- The children use confidently a range of fine motor skills to paint, draw, pour and fill containers. In the outdoors, the children gain good gross motor skills to run and handle a rug ball within the limitations of the small outdoor area.

6. Quality of provision

- There is an inclusive ethos within the playgroup through which the children with additional needs are well-integrated in the activities. Parents are given regular feedback about their children's progress. The staff have identified appropriately the need for external support and ongoing training in special education needs to build staff capacity to meet the specific needs of the children.
- The staff follow the lead of the children in play and sustain conversation with the children building effectively on their interests. The staff interactions with the children are consistently good and on occasion very good. The close involvement of all of the staff to nurture a small number of the children who require reassurance, enables all of the children to enjoy productive play throughout the session. There were some missed opportunities for the staff to model new vocabulary and develop the children's naming of objects skills.
- While the organisation of the day provides lengthy periods of play, outdoor physical play and a group story session, the opportunities for learning and language development through the snack routine and transitions for tidy-up are underdeveloped.
- The staff compile detailed long- and medium-term written planning for the six areas of learning in the pre-school curriculum. The key worker observations of the children's progress inform aspects of the planning to provide progression in the activities. The staff have appropriately identified the planning and assessment processes as an ongoing area of development in order to ensure sufficient challenge for the children throughout the pre-school year.

- The staff provide defined areas of learning set within the two learning areas. The areas are enhanced using authentic resources and stimulating activities to promote the children's interests across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the playgroup's approach to the care and welfare of the children impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. There is a respectful, caring environment for learning and development and as a result the children are well-behaved and are starting to form friendships.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the playgroup is very good. The representatives of the management committee report very good collaborative working relationships with the staff, local community and the local primary school. They promote the inclusion of parents for the development of the pre-school provision. Within a short period of time, the leadership at all levels, has undertaken significant consultation and action to improve the quality of the pre-school programme and provision for the children. There is a clear vision and a shared sense of direction for improvement. The committee have appropriately identified the need to seek alternative accommodation for the playgroup in order to minimise the pressure on space in the primary school and to promote high quality provision. The committee have defined roles and provide a support and challenge function through supervision and monitoring of the work of the staff. A wide range of policies and procedures are in place to guide the day-to-day work of the staff with the children.
- The staff are reflective in their practice and have identified appropriate areas for improvement in the three year development plan, which are in line with the inspection findings. Appropriate links are being made within clusters of local playgroups and with a local SureStart to share information about how to support the children on transition into pre-school. There are very good arrangements in place for the children to make a secure transition from the playgroup to year one in the adjoining primary school.
- The early years specialist (EYS) from the Early Years Organisation (EYO) provides very good advice and guidance for the staff. The impact of the advice is evident in the ongoing support for the staff to develop further the pre-school provision in line with the areas set out in the development plan. The supporting action plans do not identify clearly enough specific target areas for improvement. The staff have identified appropriate training opportunities to improve this aspect of the development planning process and the processes for self-evaluation in order to promote continuous improvement in the pre-school programme.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance of the relevant departments.

9. Overall effectiveness

St Caireall's Playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are:

- to review the organisation of the day and make more effective use of all the time and routines for the development of language and learning; and
- to develop further the processes for self-evaluation and action planning to promote continuous improvement.

The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

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 a representative of the management committee;
- a meeting with the early years specialist; 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 management¹:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

¹ And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>

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