

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Columba's Pre-school Group,
Kilrea, County Derry

Voluntary pre-school

Report of an Inspection in
November 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. Context	1
2. Views of parents and staff	1
3. Focus of the inspection	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	1
5. Outcomes for learners	2
6. Quality of provision	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Safeguarding	3
9. Overall effectiveness	3

Appendices

- A. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- B. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

1. Context

St Columba's Pre-school Group operates an afternoon session in the premises of St Columba's Primary School on the outskirts of Kilrea. The playgroup leader is also the teacher in the school's nursery unit which operates each morning in the same premises. There has been a decline in the enrolment numbers this year; over the previous four years, enrolment has been steady, with an average enrolment of 14 children.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	9
Funded by Department of Education	9
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#
With English as an additional language	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	9
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	87.61%
Number of days open in previous school year	190

Source: data provided by the setting.

.# fewer than 5

2. Views of parents and staff

Forty-four percent of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses were very positive. In their written responses the parents highlighted the dedication and enthusiasm of the staff for all aspects of the children's care and education and the staff highlighted the effective teamwork and their focus on respecting and valuing every child in the playgroup. The questionnaire responses were shared with the leader and a representative from 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	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very good
Quality of provision	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

5. Outcomes for learners

- Most of the children are very well settled, engage enthusiastically in sustained periods of play and almost all achieve well across all areas of learning. They contribute purposefully to discussions during play, and interact assuredly with each other and with staff and visitors.
- The children manage their personal needs confidently and are independent in following the well-established procedures of the day, including helping to prepare the snack and changing into their outdoor clothing and footwear.
- The children understand key mathematical concepts, such as number, shape and measures and use mathematical language confidently during play time, and during the routines of the day. Most of the children listen and participate well during story and rhyme time.
- The children who require support with aspects of their learning respond very well to the strategies deployed by the staff and are progressing well in their individualised learning programmes.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff create a very positive, stimulating and organised learning environment in which the children are well supported in extending their learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The outdoor learning area is a key strength of the provision, and the children benefit from quality opportunities to develop their physical skills and to explore and investigate their natural environment.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is consistently of a high standard. The children's ideas and interests are skilfully sought and built upon through open-ended questioning and modelling of language. The children with specific communication needs are beginning to benefit from staff's use of Makaton sign language.
- The written planning guides well the work of the staff and enables the children to access a well-balanced, progressive curriculum with very appropriate and creative learning opportunities. Relevant observations, assessments and evaluations inform well the next stage in the children's learning.
- The children who have additional learning needs are identified early, and close liaison with parents and relevant professionals is prioritised in order to inform the individualised support programmes in place. There are effective strategies in place in almost all activities to promote the inclusion of all of the children in whole group activities.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. The children respond positively to the caring, nurturing environment in which they are valued and praised for their contributions.

7. Leadership and management

- The highly experienced and committed staff work collaboratively and with a positive determination to provide high quality care and provision. The playgroup's approach to development planning and self-evaluation is informed appropriately by staff and parent consultation and key priorities for improvement align well to staff's professional development.
- The management group are aware of, and support fully the work of the playgroup in meeting the needs of the children.
- The playgroup has established very good links with parents and the local community. Training opportunities through the 'Getting Ready to Learn' strategy are well attended by parents and extended family, and management regularly seek and use the views of parents to help inform future developments. There are very effective links with the main feeder primary school which promotes well a smooth and purposeful transition for the children.

8. Safeguarding

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

9. Overall effectiveness

St Columba's Pre School Group has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the children.

The ETI will monitor how the pre-school group 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 those involved with leadership and management, including 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 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:

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.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2019

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk