

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Tiny Toons Community Playgroup,  
Downpatrick, County Down

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



# CONTENTS

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

## **Appendices**

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

## 1. Context

Tiny Toons Community Playgroup is accommodated in a self-contained unit in the Ballyhornan area of Downpatrick. Since the last inspection there has been a reduction in the number of staff. A new assistant was appointed in September 2015 and a new early years' specialist (EYS) commenced working with the playgroup in March 2018.

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>
Attending part-time	15
Under 3 years of age*	#
Funded by Department of Education	10
With statement of special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
With English as an additional language	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	82.5%
Number of days open in previous school year	190

**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

Most of parents responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were very positive about almost all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. The written comments recognised the warm and caring ethos where the children are happy and enjoy their learning. All of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire and their responses were wholly positive. In their written comments, they highlighted the effective teamwork and their commitment to maintaining high standards of learning and teaching despite the reduction in staffing.

## 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	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Good

#### 5. Outcomes for learners

- All of the children are happy and secure in the playgroup environment. They settle quickly to play and are very familiar with the rules and routines in the setting. Most of the children are independent; they register for snack, choose resources for their learning and file their work in labelled drawers. A very small number of children find it difficult to sustain their play without the support of an adult.
- Most of the children enjoy painting and talk confidently about their colour choices when drawing, for example, ladybirds and flowers. During the inspection, a majority of the children expressed their ideas through imaginative play and were observed having afternoon tea and making kebab skewers in the home corner. Outdoors, the children enjoy making music; they use a wide range of percussion instruments to perform songs.
- Many of the children show an interest in the world around them and use their senses to explore the scented candles, flowers, shells, pebbles and real food. Most of the children have good physical skills. They are able to balance, climb, slide, run, peddle and use confidently a range of small tools.
- All of the children are able to recognise their name, label their work and a small number are able to write their own name. The majority of children mark-make using a variety of tools to express their ideas. While the children enjoy listening to the story, they have a limited interest in accessing books independently.
- Most of the children are able to count, sort and match using the appropriate mathematical language. However, there is limited evidence of the children's understanding of measures, weight and shape in both the written observations of the children's learning and during the inspection.
- The staff observations reflect appropriately that those children identified with additional needs make good progress.

#### 6. Quality of provision

- The short-term planning is an important area for improvement. While the children have good opportunities for learning in a majority of areas within the pre-school curriculum, the children have insufficient opportunities to progress aspects of their mathematical and language development.
- The staff know the children very well and make regular observations across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff link well observations in the children's personal, social and emotional development and physical development to the short-term planning. However, the observations in other areas of the curriculum are not used effectively enough to inform the future planning and meet the children's individual needs. Observations in language development are focused too narrowly on the children's pre-writing skills.

- The staff engage positively with the children. They listen to the children's responses and work collaboratively to develop the children's learning. They respond sensitively to the children's requests for help and support. During the inspection, the staff missed opportunities to develop the children's language and extend their thinking.
- The staff provide an attractive learning environment using a range of natural and authentic resources to stimulate the children's curiosity and promote an interest in the world around them. The children's work is valued and displayed attractively within the playroom.
- The children who have additional learning needs are identified appropriately. The staff use a range of suitable strategies, for example, a visual timetable, to support the children in their play. However, the targets on the children's individual education plans do not provide enough detail for the staff to monitor the children's progress.
- 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. All of the staff are committed fully and dedicated to the children in their care. They provide a welcoming and safe environment which is reflected in the children's very good standard of behaviour and enjoyment of the playgroup.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The staff work collaboratively as a team and are committed fully to providing high quality provision for the children. Recent improvement work on developing the provision for the world around us, physical play and music has impacted positively on the outcomes for the children. The development plan outlines appropriate areas for improvement; however, the action plans lack the necessary detail to support staff in their improvement work.
- The management committee has a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and provide practical support to the staff. In the past few years, the setting has received a good level of support from the early years' specialist. It will be important that the new early years' specialist works with the staff to support them in developing aspects identified within the report and in the rigorous evaluation of their practice.
- The staff share regular and appropriate information to the parents through social media and monthly newsletters. There are useful links with the local primary school which supports the children with their transition.

## **8. Safeguarding**

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the relevant Departments. However, Tiny Toons Community Playgroup needs to: ensure the deputy leader completes the upcoming training for the role of deputy designated child protection officer.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Tiny Toons Community Playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the children.

There is an area for improvement that the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area for improvement is:

- to develop further the short-term planning to ensure there is progression in learning for all children across all areas of the curriculum.

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 those involved with leadership and management; 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.



© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2018

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](http://www.etini.gov.uk)