

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Maine Integrated Playgroup,  
Randalstown, County Antrim

Voluntary pre-school playgroup

Report of an Inspection in  
March 2017



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

<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. Overall effectiveness	3

## **Appendices**

- A. Information on sessions and staff
- B. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Context

Maine Integrated Playgroup is situated in mobile accommodation within the grounds of Maine Integrated Primary School. The playgroup has access to the primary school's facilities, including the school hall and a small enclosed outdoor play area. A new leader was appointed in 2014 and a new assistant was appointed the following year.

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>
Attending full-time	24
Attending part-time	0
Under 3 years of age*	0
Funded by Department of Education	24
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2	
Average attendance for the previous year.	86%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

**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

N/A not available

### 2. Views of parents and staff

Seventeen percent of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of responses were highly positive. In their written comments, the parents emphasised the playgroup's nurturing and child-centred ethos, the professional and approachable staff and the high quality of the information they received. The ETI shared with the leader and the chair of the management committee the responses from the questionnaires.

### 3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, 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>	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Very good
<b>Quality of provision</b>	Very good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Very good

#### KEY FINDINGS

##### 5. Outcomes for learners

- The children are very well settled, with excellent levels of independence; they engage in the routines of the day confidently and manage the well-presented resources and equipment with ease. Almost all engage in sustained play in the playroom and interact positively and openly with staff, their peers and visitors. The children have a sense of social responsibility and an early understanding of interdependence and teamwork; they tidy up, share resources and co-operate in play with a notable level of maturity.
- Almost all of the children are making very good progress across the pre-school curriculum. They understand early number and measurement and use the language of capacity and measure. The children are very attentive and curious in the group story sessions; they express their needs and opinions openly in discussions. A majority are interested and competent in early mark-making. They assume roles easily in the play areas and are developing very well their fine motor skills. The children create artwork which shows a high level of proficiency and creativity using an attractive and varied range of materials.

##### 6. Quality of provision

- The staff organise and present the playroom and resources with thought and care, both to maximise the children's ownership of the space and to help them to develop their self-reliance. The children are provided with a very good selection of authentic materials and equipment, the use of which enhances their interest and extends the quality and extent of the learning.
- Planning covers all areas of pre-school curriculum and there is evidence of progression in the learning as a result. The observations and assessments conducted by the staff do not always inform the planning directly; the staff need to record the children's responses with greater precision and shape the planning to meet the specific needs of all of the children.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is consistently very good. The staff are skilful in helping the children to connect their learning and make the most of incidental opportunities for further learning. The adults model constructive play and ask open-ended questions to extend the children's thinking, and build their language and problem-solving skills.
- The quality of care and welfare benefits the children's learning, all-round development and well-being. There is a welcoming family ethos which permeates all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup with the staff taking constant account of the children's needs and interests.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- There is a successful collaborative team approach within the playgroup which makes effective use of the staff's complementary interests and skills. The leader has a clear vision of continuous improvement and is supported very well by the dedicated staff and management committee in all areas of the life and work of the playgroup.
- The staff's approach to self-evaluation identifies appropriate priorities for improvement in all areas of the provision; there are appropriate strategies for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the improvements.
- The staff communicate well with the parents, who are very supportive of the work of the playgroup. Valuable and productive partnerships have been established with the local integrated primary school, other early years' practitioners and with support agencies, all for the benefit of the children.
- The playgroup employs an early years specialist to support its work; high-quality, transparent working relationships bring about continuous improvement in the provision for the children.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **8. Overall effectiveness**

Maine Integrated Playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

**Information on sessions and staff****Duration of sessions**

<b>Part-time: am</b>
9.00-11.45am

**Details of staff**

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3
New appointments within the previous 12 months	0

<b>Number of: *</b>	
Students	1

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

\* Total placements since September of current year

N/A not available

**Inspection method and evidence base**

The effective practice and self-evaluation questions which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school settings, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *The Pre-school Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework* at: <https://www.eti.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

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

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2017

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)