

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Drumnamoe Nursery School,
Lurgan, County Armagh

Maintained nursery school

Report of an Inspection in
January 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Drumnamoe Nursery School is located in the Kilwilke estate in north Lurgan. It operates two full-time classes and two part-time classes; there are 17 children in their penultimate pre-school year attending the part-time classes. The children attending the nursery come from a wide catchment area.

At the time of the inspection, two substitute teachers were in place in each of the full-time classes. Since the last inspection, a new classroom and a garden area have been incorporated to the site; the school has also received a green eco-flag and an Investors In People (IIP) bronze award. The school staff work collaboratively with a controlled nursery school as part of the Shared Education programme.

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Attending full-time	28	26		
Attending part-time			26	26
Under 3 years of age*			5	12
Funded by Department of Education	28	26	26	26
With statement of special educational needs	#	#	0	0
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.	14.7
Average attendance for the previous year.	79%
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

Thirty three of the parents and eleven of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were highly positive about all aspects of the nursery. In particular, the parents report their appreciation of the high quality learning experiences, the caring and approachable staff and the very good progress their children are making. The staff responses indicated high levels of confidence in the leadership and management and a shared team commitment to providing high quality pre-school education.

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

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
Quality of provision	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children participate in very high levels of settled, purposeful play throughout the sessions, are confident and independent in the daily routines and are proud of their achievements. They take responsibility for looking after their environment, persevere to complete tasks and respect and care for one another.
- The children are developing very well their language and communication skills; they talk confidently about their experiences during their play with each other and the staff, listen attentively and use a growing vocabulary. They participate enthusiastically using props during group stories and show a very good awareness of rhyme and rhythm.
- The children's awareness of mathematical concepts and use of early mathematical language is developing very well. The children count, make comparisons of weight, size and capacity, sort by colour and shape, use positional language and show an awareness of time through their use of visual cues and timers.
- The children make connections in their learning as they develop their own creative ideas using a wide range of art materials. They engage in imaginative role play linked to both their home experiences and the current topic of fairytales. They independently design and construct detailed models using a wide range of materials, make close observations and investigations using their senses to explore for example, the smell of the ginger in the dough, observing mini beasts in the garden area and looking inside technological equipment.
- They are also developing very good control and use of small tools and equipment and excellent co-ordination as they use a wide variety of wheeled toys, run, climb and develop ball skills during outdoor play.

- The younger children and those identified with additional needs are well integrated and access all aspects of the curriculum with skilful adult support.

6. Quality of provision

- The learning environment is of a very high quality both indoors and outdoors. The very well-managed open plan approach provides the children with flexible access to a very rich choice of learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum. The transitions between learning areas and the daily routines are smooth, unobtrusive and support the children's independence very well. The skilful incorporation of natural and real items both indoors and outdoors enhances the language rich environment and promotes a high degree of investigative play.
- There is a strong collaborative approach to planning the programme, a good shared understanding of the pre-school curriculum and consistent implementation by the whole staff team. There is planned progression in the learning and the evaluations are well used to link the planning to the interests and needs of the children. Regular assessments of the children's responses to the provision are used to build profiles of progress to inform parents and set individual targets for the children. The staff are positive about the new electronic systems for recording their observations and make appropriate amendments in response to their own monitoring and evaluation of these approaches.
- The interactions between the staff and the children are of a very high quality. They build well on the children's own ideas, promote their independence and have a consistent approach to promoting positive behaviour. Particular strengths also include the staff skill in developing the children's natural curiosity, modelling mathematical language and introducing new key vocabulary as a natural part of the daily routines and play experiences.
- The children who have additional learning needs are identified at an early stage; they are integrated very well and are supported effectively by the staff in conjunction with effective links with other professionals and the parents.
- The high quality of care and welfare impacts positively on the outcomes for the children. The inclusive, caring, family ethos in which each child is valued builds the children's confidence and contributes to their well being and positive attitudes to learning.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the nursery school is highly effective as evidenced by the sustained high quality pre-school education being provided. The distributive leadership approach creates a strong team in which staff skills are recognised, valued and utilised to good effect.
- The school leads professional discussion and sharing of practice within the area through links with other schools and pre-schools. The very effective links to the feeder primary schools and close communication with the local Sure Start promotes smooth transitions for the children. This very effective practice should continue to be built on to promote continuity of learning between Sure Start, pre-school and primary school within this area based approach.

- The very good relationships and communication with parents keeps them well informed about the life and work of the nursery and the progress of their children. The regular special events organised for the wider family encourages them to share in their children's learning and development.
- The board of governors are well informed, manage the school budget and recruitment of staff effectively and are highly supportive of the school. The school development planning process leads to continuous improvement in the professional development of the staff and in the quality of the provision. This includes for example: the development of teaching and support staff to promote effectively children's decision making and positive behaviour: the improvements in the outdoor garden area; and the effective organisation of an open plan approach across all classes.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

CONCLUSION

8. Overall effectiveness

Drumnamoe Nursery School has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The ETI will monitor how the nursery school sustains improvement.

Information on sessions and staff

Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
9:00-1:30	9:00-11:30	12:15-2:45

Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	14	
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	7	
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	4	
New appointments within the previous 12 months (substitute)	2	

Number of: *	
Students	3

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 a representative from 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 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 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.

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