

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Dromore Nursery School,
Dromore, County Down

Controlled nursery school

Report of an Inspection in
April 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

Dromore Nursery School is located in purpose-built accommodation on the Banbridge Road near the town centre of Dromore. The nursery school operates one full-time and two part-time funded sessions. Since the last inspection, the school has received an International Schools Award from the British Council, a Silver Investor's in People Award, a Families First Award, and a third Green Eco-flag. The school staff work collaboratively with a maintained nursery school as part of the Shared Education programme.

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Attending full-time	29	-	-
Attending part-time	-	26	26
Under 3 years of age*	0	0	0
Funded by Department of Education	29	26	26
With statement of special educational needs	#	#	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#	0	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	#	0	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0	0	0
With English as an additional language	0	#	0
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	0	0

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	9.8
Average attendance for the previous year.	93%
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

Forty-two percent of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaire and their responses were wholly positive. In particular, the parents praised highly: the work of the principal and staff in creating an inclusive, caring and safe learning environment; the very good progress of their children; the effective links established with the parents; and, the wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences provided for the children. All of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire and their responses were wholly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the nursery school.

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

- All of the children, including those with complex needs, are enthusiastically and purposefully engaged in their learning for the duration of the session. They settle very quickly, choose independently where they want to play, and work constructively together to express their ideas, solve problems and support each other with their learning. The children's behaviour and manners are exemplary; they move indoors and outdoors calmly and freely, showing respect and care for one another.
- Almost all of the children communicate confidently with the staff, visitors and each other about their personal experiences and their play using an increasing range of vocabulary. They listen attentively to stories during community time and enjoy retelling them to their friends using a range of props. The children play creatively and imaginatively with a wide range of natural and man-made materials. They take great pride in their artwork; their representational drawings are highly developed.
- The children demonstrate a very good understanding of age-appropriate mathematical language and concepts as they count, sort, measure and make comparisons as part of their play. Most of the children are developing a very good knowledge of one-to-one correspondence and sequencing.
- The children are naturally curious about the world around them and use their senses to explore and investigate their environment. They are developing very well a respect for, and knowledge of, living things by looking after a range of class pets, incubating bird's eggs and planting and attending to the vegetables and flowers in the outdoor garden.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff provide a richly resourced, well-structured and organised learning environment for the children, comprising an exceptionally wide range of natural and authentic resources to which parents make concrete and practical contributions. The outdoor learning environment is a particular strength of the provision; it is kept under constant review and accommodates very well to the needs and interests of all of the children.
- The staff's interactions with the children are of a consistently high quality. Communication with the children is engaging, positive and purposeful and promotes very well the children's self-esteem, confidence, language and problem solving skills. Consequently, a calm, settled and orderly atmosphere pervades the nursery school.

- Highly structured short, medium and long term planning is in place which is meticulously and accurately detailed and provides a framework for a broad and balanced pre-school curriculum; the planning provides clear direction for all adults working with the children. The children are rigorously monitored and assessed on an individual basis with an effective, thorough and structured system in place for observing, assessing and recording the children's progress. Staff make systematic observations of the children's progress to tailor the programme to meet the range of the children's needs.
- There is excellent provision made for children identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. Their needs are well planned for and supported effectively by the staff in collaboration with a range of external agencies.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school's approach to the care and welfare of the children impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. The principal, supported by governors and staff, is in the process of implementing an innovative whole-school, child-centred scheme, with a focus on the development of children's mental health and well-being, which is extending and enhancing the school's inclusive approach to meeting the needs of all of the children.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership of the provision is strategic, innovative and wholly committed to providing high quality care and education for all children. The emphasis placed on the continuous professional development of the staff has resulted in a team that is very knowledgeable, well-focused and who use their skills to secure the best outcomes for the children. The board of governors are highly supportive of the staff and fully conversant in the work of the nursery and the learning being developed.
- There is a highly effective approach to school development planning and self-evaluation which leads to sustained improvement in all aspects of the provision.
- The nursery school has excellent links with parents, who are kept well-informed about the progress of their children. Parents have regular opportunities to be involved in their child's learning and development through, for example, the Getting Ready to Learn programme. The principal has skilfully led cross-sectoral collaborative training for local playgroups and primary schools which has strengthened further links between the schools, supported the transition of the children and contributed significantly to the sharing of good practice.
- 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

Dromore 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.

Health and safety / accommodation

In the short and medium term parents/carers need advice about safe car parking and driving arrangements regularly reinforced to ensure the maximum safety of the children. A longer-term planned arrangement for dropping off and collecting the children, which is subject to a planning proposal, needs to be resolved.

Information on sessions and staff

Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
8.45 – 13.30	8.45 – 11.15	11.45 – 14.15

Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders	3	3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	1	1
New appointments within the previous 12 months	2	0

Number of: *	
Students	4
Trainees	6

Source: data provided by the setting.

* Total placements since September of current year

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 board of governors; 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 the 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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