

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Forge Integrated Playgroup,
Belfast

Voluntary pre-school playgroup

Report of an Inspection in
November 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



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1. Context

Forge Integrated Playgroup is located in the grounds of Forge Integrated Primary School in south Belfast. The playgroup operates both a morning and an afternoon session and the facilities include indoor and outdoor play areas. All of the children come from the local area.

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending part-time	24	24
Funded by Department of Education	24	24
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#	0
With English as an additional language	#	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	100%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

Source: data provided by the setting.

** 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

Thirteen percent of the parents and almost all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were highly positive and in particular the parents commented upon the regular communication received from the supportive, kind staff and the contentment and confidence of the children.

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

- All of the children are very well settled and spend lengthy periods engaged in sustained purposeful play of a collaborative and solitary nature. They respond positively to the well-established routine of the playroom, interact well with one and other and with the staff and visitors; their behaviour is exemplary. The children are highly independent and self-managing. They register themselves on arrival and for snack time, label their own creative work and choose resources for their learning.
- The children are achieving very well across the six areas of learning. They enjoy reading books; respond enthusiastically to rhymes and action songs; and most of the children enjoy experimenting with the wide range of writing implements provided. They engage in role play easily, produce detailed representational drawings and have an interest in, and take care of their environment.
- The children are developing very well their understanding of key mathematical concepts and language, particularly in measures, shape and early number, through well-resourced and meaningful play indoors and outdoors.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff have created stimulating well-organised play areas. The outdoor area has recently been enhanced to allow for a wide range of learning activities which includes investigating the world around them. Resources are stored to be easily accessible, providing the children with opportunities to develop their independence, problem solving and perseverance.
- The interactions between the staff and the children are of a consistently high quality. Very good and effective questioning by staff encourages, supports and challenges the children. The staff listen to and respond appropriately to the children's requests.
- Clear planning provides opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum which builds on the previous experiences of the children. The staff know the children very well and their regular observations are used to inform future planning and ensure that their individual needs are met.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning and teaching, and outcomes. A welcoming, caring ethos and excellent working relationships influence the work of the playgroup and provide an environment which promotes independence and active learning.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff, who are enthusiastic and dedicated, work very effectively as a team. They are committed to enhancing their own skills and avail of the many training opportunities offered through the management committee and by the early years specialist. There is a culture of self-evaluation and clear evidence of the impact that this has had on various aspects of the playgroup's provision.

- The independent early years specialist, who has been working with the setting for six years, provides regular support and makes a very good contribution to the development of the provision in the playgroup.
- There are effective links with parents who are kept informed of the life and work of the playgroup through the monthly newsletter and are provided with opportunities to participate in workshops enhancing their knowledge of early learning. Very good links exist with the primary school to which the majority of children transfer.

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

Forge Integrated Playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the children. 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, 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 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.

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