

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Edenderry Nursery School,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in May 2013



Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON EDENDERRY NURSERY SCHOOL, BELFAST

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	25
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of special educational needs	1	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	16	14
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	11	12
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	5	2
With English as an additional language	0	0

* On 1 July.

** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	100%
Average attendance for the previous year.	83%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4 ¾ hours - 4 days	-	-
3 ¾ hours - 1 day	-	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	2	4
Nursery Assistants (non-qualified)	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	50
Percentage returned	30%
Number of written comments	9

1. Introduction

Edenderry Nursery School is situated on Upper Riga Street, off Tennent Street in West Belfast. The majority of the children attending the nursery come from the surrounding area. The nursery currently has 87% free school meals.

2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations and from a range of documentation provided by the nursery.

The views of the parents, staff, and management group were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Fifty questionnaires were issued to the parents and 15 were returned, nine with written comments. The staff and the management group also returned the questionnaires with written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaires were very positive and almost all indicated a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the nursery's work; in particular the parents valued the welcoming atmosphere, the friendly and approachable staff and the opportunities to meet other parents including those involved in cross-community events. The staff commented on the child-centered approach to learning and the opportunities to involve parents in their children's learning. The responses from the Board of Governors were very positive and they commented on how they value their involvement in the life and work of the nursery. They also praised the hard work and commitment of the staff in meeting the needs of the children. The responses, including the small number of concerns, have been shared with the staff and the representative of the Board of Governors.

3. Overall finding of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the nursery school is outstanding; the quality of the pastoral care is also outstanding. The nursery school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Outstanding Outstanding Outstanding
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4. Children's achievements

The quality of the children's achievements is outstanding.

- The atmosphere in the nursery school is friendly and welcoming for the children and their parents. The staff have worked hard to provide an exciting learning environment and the children are eager to explore new learning and make full use of the stimulating indoor and outdoor provision. They engage in concentrated, productive and co-operative play and are encouraged to extend their learning through the introduction of additional resources of their own choice.

- The children's representational drawings and early mark making skills are highly valued by the staff and displayed imaginatively around the classrooms and shared spaces within the nursery. Their thoughts and feelings about their learning experiences have been sensitively recorded by the staff in captions written on their work and demonstrate the children's creativity and imagination. The children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm is evidenced by their regular contributions to the planning process; these ideas are prominently displayed for the children and their parents.
- The staff have appropriately emphasised the development of speech and language and the children confidently use their conversational skills to talk to each other, the staff and visitors about their learning. The children show a keen interest in story-telling, songs and rhymes and contribute enthusiastically to the many organised and spontaneous story and music sessions. Early mathematical language is modelled effectively by the staff and used appropriately by the children across a range of activities. The staff monitor the children's progress and development carefully throughout the year and have clear evidence to show that almost all of the children are making good progress in line with their age and stage of development and personal circumstances.

5. Provision for learning

The quality of the provision for learning is outstanding

- The provision for pastoral care is outstanding. The staff know the children and their families well and provide support and care which extends beyond the nursery into the local community. The staff are very caring and respond with great sensitivity to the daily needs of the children. There are high expectations at all levels of provision and achievement within the nursery, and the staff work very hard to provide the children with positive attitudes to their learning in preparation for their future education.
- The staff make very effective use of the introductory routines to extend the children's speech and language skills and fully engage the children in their daily learning experiences. Snack and dinnertime routines are used very effectively to promote the children's conversational and social skills, and the children show high levels of independence when helping the staff with the organisation of these activities.
- The staff interactions with the children are of a very high quality and every available opportunity is used to model and promote effective communication skills. The staff skilfully encourage the children to express their ideas and opinions, providing appropriate time for the children to articulate their thoughts. The children are supported in making connections across the pre-school curriculum and are encouraged to problem-solve and investigate. The staff also promote the children's self-esteem and confidence through consistent praise and encouragement for their achievements.

- The planning process in the nursery is one which involves extensive consultation with the children, taking into consideration their individual interests and needs. The children contribute to the process using mind mapping which is skilfully managed by the staff to ensure all the areas of the pre-school school curriculum are appropriately developed. Throughout the planning period children are provided with opportunities to extend their learning experiences by adapting and evolving the activities and resources. The staff regularly evaluate the learning outcomes and maintain detailed observations and assessments of each child's progress. The staff have accessed training in a range of programmes and incorporate effective strategies within their daily routines to meet effectively the range of complex learning needs within the nursery.
- The nursery school gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the provision of a healthy snack and excellent opportunities for energetic play. The outdoor play area has been thoughtfully and imaginatively planned to make use of the available space to provide areas for energetic play, and investigation and exploration. Children are encouraged in the care of living things through their involvement in an extensive planting programme of flowers and vegetables, and responsibility for looking after small animals and fish.

6. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The Principal provides outstanding leadership and management in all aspects of the nursery school provision. She is ably supported by the skilled and hard working teacher and classroom assistants who provide excellent role models for the children in their care. There is a strong sense of team spirit, and the staff and governors have a shared vision of the central role the nursery plays in the lives of the children, their parents and the local community.
- There is an established culture of self-evaluation in the nursery school and all the members of the school community are actively encouraged to contribute to the on-going cycle of reflection and whole-school improvement. The comprehensive school development plan provides a strategic basis for the future development of the nursery and priorities are clearly focused on improving the learning outcomes for the children. The high quality of the evaluation process has contributed to the nursery attaining the Investors in People Award.
- The nursery has extensive links with a wide range of community groups and external agencies to provide support for the children and their families. The links are effectively managed by the Principal and delivered by a team of dedicated support staff. Parents are particularly encouraged to become involved in school and community based courses and information meetings. Regular home-school liaison is maintained by the staff and also through the involvement of the Lifestart programme. An after-school and holiday club managed by the nursery extends the provision for the children and maintains consistent contact with families throughout the year. The long established and well-regarded cross-community programme provides the children and their parents with a range of shared experiences including an annual residential trip.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the nursery school has comprehensive arrangements in place for the safeguarding of children. The arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery school is outstanding; the quality of the pastoral care is also outstanding. The nursery school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Accommodation

- The staff has made excellent use of the current accommodation but the condition of the building and the limited space available, both internally and externally, places additional pressure on the staff and the Board and Governors in meeting the complex learning needs of the children and support for their families.

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