

The Inspection Process

Information for Staff

INSPECTIONS OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION CENTRES

WHY IS OUR PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE BEING INSPECTED?

All pre-school education centres receiving funding from the Department of Education (DE) are inspected and visited regularly by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).

The inspection in your pre-school centre will assess how well:

- > the children are progressing in their learning;
- > the centre is helping them to learn and develop; and
- > the centre is attending to the children's education, care, welfare and safety.

Inspections tell **all** those who need to know, such as the parents, DE, the Pre-school Education Advisory Group (PEAG) and the Government, about the quality of the education being provided and about what needs to be changed if improvements are required.

WHO INSPECTS?

An inspection team has members of ETI who have qualifications and a range of experience in the field of early years education. The team is led by a Reporting Inspector (RI) who is in charge of the inspection and the report of the findings. In most inspections, an Associate Assessor (AA) will accompany the RI.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN INSPECTION?

The inspectors:

- > observe the children during their play and other activities;
- > talk to the children about what they are doing;
- > observe the work of the staff; and
- > talk to the Principal/Leader and the staff, Early Years Specialist (if applicable) and a representative of the management body/governors (usually the Chairperson) about the centre's programme.

They assess:

- > the quality of the working relationships in the centre;
- > the way in which the centre looks after the children's needs, including the arrangements for child protection/safeguarding;
- > the quality of the centre's environment;
- > how well the children are learning and developing;
- > how well the centre is managed and led; and
- > how well the centre relates to the parents and the wider community.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE INSPECTION PROCESS?

You may request to meet with the RI, or any member of the inspection team, during the inspection if you wish to do so. You will have an opportunity to complete a confidential questionnaire to make your views known about the quality of the provision within the centre.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The following documents are available via the ETI website:
www.etini.gov.uk

Evaluating Pre-school Education
Evaluating Pastoral Care
A Charter for Inspection
Improving Inspection - Procedures for Handling Enquiries, Comments or Complaints.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER AN INSPECTION?

When the report on the centre is published, it will be available on the ETI website:
www.etini.gov.uk

If the report finds that there are important areas for improvement, the management group or governors/proprietor will be asked to draw up an action plan to be submitted to the ETI and a follow-up inspection will take place.

An evaluation of inspection procedures will be conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Questionnaire details will be sent to the Leader/Proprietor/Principal after the inspection. All information you give is completely confidential. If you wish to comment on any aspect of the inspection or the report, you should write to the Chief Inspector at the address below.

The Chief Inspector, the Reporting Inspector and Inspection Services Branch may be contacted at:

Department of Education
Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
BANGOR
Co Down
BT19 7PR

Telephone: 028 9127 9726