

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Naíscóil Mhaol Íosa,  
Derry

Report of an Inspection  
in June 2012

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school centre:</b>	Naíscoil Mhaol Íosa
<b>Address:</b>	12 Coshquin Road DERRY BT48 0ND
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	6 June 2012
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	19 April 2007

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
• attending the pre-school centre	21	-
• in their immediate pre-school year	15	-
• funded by Department of Education (DE)	15	-
• qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	*	-
• with a statement of special educational needs	*	-
• without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	*	-
• with English as an additional language	*	-
• who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	*	-
<b>Attendance:</b>		
• attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	-	-

\* = fewer than 5

\*\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff, including leader	*	1
Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications	*	1
New appointments within previous 12 months	*	*

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	1
Trainees	*

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

## 3. Details of Sessions

<b>Duration of morning session</b>	<b>Duration of afternoon session</b>	<b>Number of days open in previous year</b>
3 hours	-	

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	19
Percentage returned:	16%
Number of written comments:	*

## **NAÍScoil MHAOL ÍOSA, DERRY, BT48 0ND (2BB-0511)**

1. Naíscoil Mhaol Íosa is situated in purpose-built accommodation in the grounds of Gaelscoil na Daróige in the Ballymagroarty area of Derry city. Since the last inspection, in April 2007, a new outdoor play area has been developed and the services of a new early year's specialist (EYS) from Altram have been availed of since September 2011.

2. At the time of the inspection, the staffing arrangements in the naíscoil did not meet fully the requirements for those centres receiving funding as part of the government's Preschool Education Expansion Programme.

### **CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS**

3. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the naíscoil is inadequate; the areas for improvement significantly outweigh the strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified major areas for improvement in achievements and standards, learning and teaching, leadership and management, which need to be addressed urgently if the naíscoil is to meet effectively the needs of all of the learners. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the naíscoil's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-18 month period.

4. During the inspection, a small number of children worked collaboratively and independently at model making and construction activities and there were good opportunities for the children to mark -make. Overall, however, the majority of the children do not engage in productive play or learning and were not sufficiently settled for the time of year.

### **THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING**

5. During the inspection, the quality of the interaction between the staff and the children ranged from good to inadequate. In the best practice the staff listened and responded to the children's ideas and were good role models for the children. On too many occasions, however, the staff missed opportunities to build on the children's ideas and to sustain their interest in the activities. On the day of the inspection, the programme of activities on offer to the children was inadequate and did not meet the children's individual needs and interests. The staff do not implement consistent and agreed strategies for the management of the children's behaviour to enable the children to learn in a secure environment.

6. The assessment of, and for, the children's learning is not developed well enough; it is not linked closely enough to the planned programme in order to ensure progression in the children's learning. Overall the programme is not sufficiently challenging for the children in relation to their age and stage of development.

7. The daily timetable is fragmented and there is an over emphasis on staff-directed activities.

8. The provision for pastoral care within the playgroup is satisfactory. The children appear happy and content; they are at ease with the staff and often invite the adults to join in their play.

9. On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the naíscail's arrangements for safeguarding children are unsatisfactory and do not adequately reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In particular the naíscail needs to ensure that:

- all of the staff within the naíscail receive adequate child protection training on a regular basis and that they are clear on the procedures for recording and reporting child protection matters;
- there is a designated and deputy-designated person, within the naíscail, with responsibility for all aspects of child protection matters; and
- all policies and procedures relating to child protection are shared with the parents, in particular, the procedures for the intimate care of young children.

10. The naíscail gives satisfactory attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the provision of a healthy snack and opportunities for physical outdoor play.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

11. The leadership and management of the naíscail are inadequate. The Leader needs to develop a more effective, strategic approach to developing all aspects of the work of the naíscail.

12. The process of self-evaluation is at an early stage. The naíscail's early years specialist (EYS), from Altram, has assisted the staff in drawing up a useful three year development plan which identifies appropriately areas for improvement within the naíscail provision.

13. The naíscail's EYS has been working with the staff since September 2011. She has been instrumental in supporting the staff to make improvements in the layout and presentation of the playroom. She has identified appropriately the need to develop further the methods of planning the curriculum and assessing the children's learning.

14. **The key strengths of the naíscail include:**

- the development of the children's early writing and mark-making skills;
- the instances of sustained interactions of the staff with the children and
- the recent improvements in the presentation and layout of the playroom brought about by the support of the EYS.

15. **The areas for improvement include the need:**

- to review all of the naíscail's policies and procedures to ensure that they are relevant to, and reflect, the work of the naíscail;
- to develop further the planning and assessment methods in order to meet the children's individual needs and to raise their standards and achievements in all areas of learning;

- to ensure that the behaviour management strategies are agreed and implemented consistently by all of the staff; and
- to ensure the safeguarding arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

16. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the naíscoil is inadequate; the areas for improvement significantly outweigh the strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified major areas for improvement in achievements and standards, learning and teaching, leadership and management, which need to be addressed urgently if the naíscoil is to meet effectively the needs of all of the learners.

17. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-18 month period.

**QUESTIONNAIRES**

The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents and the staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. A small number of the parents responded to the questionnaire and made additional written comments. All of the parents indicated high levels of satisfaction with the provision in the naíscoil. The responses from the management group and the staff questionnaires were also very positive. All of the responses have been shared with the staff and management of the naíscoil.

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