

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Naíscoil Dhún Pádraig, Dún Pádraig, Contae an Dúin
Downpatrick, County Down

Irish-medium voluntary playgroup DE Ref No (4AB-0409)

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in March 2019

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF NAÍScoil DHÚN PÁDRAIG, DOWNPATRICK, BT30 6BS (4AB-0409)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Naíscoil Dhún Pádraig in June 2017¹, which concluded that the naíscoil needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners.

The areas for improvement identified were to improve:

- the cycle of observation, assessment and planning in order to guide sufficiently the learning, ensure progression and improve the provision across all areas of the pre-school curriculum; and,
- the leadership of self-evaluation and development planning in order to bring about the necessary improvements in the outcomes for children, the quality of the provision and leadership and management.

The naíscoil's action plans were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI. The naíscoil's development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in January 2018 and a follow-up inspection in March 2019.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the naíscoil has received external support provided by an early years' specialist from Altram, in relation to: aspects of the provision for learning and self-evaluation. Consequently, there have been improvements in the quality of education as reported in the key findings below.

During this period, other actions or changes which affect the work of the naíscoil include:

- existing staff have taken on new roles as leader and deputy leader;
- a new assistant has been appointed;
- all staff have attended a range of Irish-medium pre-school cluster training sessions and all are also currently undertaking accredited capacity-building courses;
- a member of the management committee has taken on the role of staff-liaison officer;
- a full suite of up-to-date safeguarding policies has been developed and ratified; and
- new office premises have been allocated to the naíscoil.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/pre-school-inspection-na%C3%ADscoil-dh%C3%BAn-p%C3%A1draig-downpatrick-county-down-4ab-0409.pdf>

Key findings

The quality of provision remains an important area for improvement. The cycle of planning, observation and assessment does not guide sufficiently the learning and teaching. The staff have trialled a number of approaches to planning and have introduced recently a format which they report best meets the needs of their setting. At the time of the follow-up inspection however, the intended learning outcomes and evaluations of learning remain too generic and the observations of the children's learning were still not being used effectively enough to inform future planning.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement are an important area for improvement. With the support of their early years' specialist from Altram, the staff have developed and can articulate a shared understanding of self-evaluation leading to improvement. While some progress has been made in using self-evaluation to inform their development planning, this process remains at an early stage. The newly appointed leader and deputy leader are dedicated to the life and work of the naíscóil and have established a team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. They, with the support of the management committee and Altram, have managed the recent changes in staffing well and all are working effectively together in the best interests of the children.

The outcomes for learners are now good. The staff have revised the organisation of the session and all of the children now engage in meaningful play, of both a collaborative and solitary nature, for sustained periods of time. There have been significant improvements to the learning environment with a range of stimulating resources which now provide appropriate opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. As a result of the improvements made, the children are making progress in their learning across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum.

Overall effectiveness

Naíscóil Dhún Pádraig needs to address important areas for improvement. The follow-up inspection has identified the following areas for improvement:

- to embed the recently introduced approach to planning and improve further the cycle of observation, assessment and planning in order to continue to effect improvements in the outcomes and provision; and
- to continue to develop the staff understanding and use of self-evaluation to promote improvement in the outcomes for learners, the quality of provision and leadership and management.

The ETI will conduct a further follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

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 management²:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

² And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

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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