



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Naíscoil an Chaistil
Ballycastle**

January 2008

**FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF NAÍScoil AN CHAISTIL,
BALLYCASTLE, CO ANTRIM, BT54 6QQ (3AB-0524)
DATE OF INSPECTION: 8 JANUARY 2008**

The inspection in November 2005 in Naíscoil an Chaistil, Ballycastle highlighted the caring and supportive environment, the children's co-operative behaviour, the staff's competent use of the Irish language, and the instances of effective interaction with the children, the development of the children's understanding of Irish, the quality of the accommodation and the evidence of improvement in aspects of the provision and the staff's openness to further change.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the provision of a more challenging programme of pre-school education which progresses appropriately over the year;
- the development of the staff's preparation of activities and their interaction with the children to provide a consistently stimulating and purposeful play environment; and
- the development of further planning and assessment methods which identifies effectively and meets the needs of individual children.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the pre-school centre have taken place:

- the early years specialist and an Altram adviser have provided effective guidance and support in helping the staff develop the quality of the provision;
- the effective leadership of the pre-school centre's leader in the development of a consistent programme of staff meetings and pre-school curriculum development meetings;
- the planning and assessment methods and the record-keeping formats have been revised and updated; and
- the use of the space in the pre-school centre has been reviewed appropriately and the areas for learning enhanced.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out a follow-up inspection on 8 January 2008. The pre-school centre has a development plan. It has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The following are the most important improvements brought about by the staff and the management group.

- The staff are more confident and skilful in planning and implementing a broad and balanced pre-school programme which progresses through the year.

- The revised planning formats provide appropriate guidance for the staff in their interactions with all children. The planning identifies more clearly the role of the adult and the intended learning opportunities.
- During the inspection, there were many effective examples of the staff extending the children's thinking, language and learning and promoting a sense of enjoyment. The staff promote settled and purposeful play.
- A suitable system of assessment is being developed, based on the staff's observations of the children's responses during the play; the children's records give appropriate indications of progress and the information is linked more clearly to the planning.
- The collegial approach to planning and improvement that the highly committed staff have continued to develop and refine.

Since the inspection, the pre-school centre has evaluated the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection.

The promotion of a self-evaluative culture throughout the follow-up inspection period contributed to the improvements made, and helped the pre-school centre identify appropriately its priorities for future development.

Good progress has been made in addressing the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection. The educational and pastoral needs of the children are well met. The parents and broader community can have confidence in the effectiveness of the pre-school's response to the findings of the inspection and its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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