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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of an Inspection

Naíscoil an Lóiste Úir
Belfast

Inspected: May 2008

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Name of pre-school centre: | Naiscoil an Lóiste Úir |
| Address: | 174 Trust Complex Duncairn Avenue BELFAST BT14 6BP |
| Management Type: | Voluntary |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Date of inspection: | 6 May 2008 |
| Date of previous inspection: | 6 March 2003 |

1. Details of Children

| Total number of children: | am session | pm session |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| • attending the pre-school centre | 15 | - |
| • in their immediate pre-school year | 15 | - |
| • funded by Department of Education | 15 | - |
| • qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2 | 9 | - |
| • with a statement of special educational needs | 0 | - |
| • without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs | 4 | - |
| • with English as an additional language | 0 | - |
| • who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school | 0 | - |
| Attendance: | | |
| • attendance* of funded children for the previous school year | 77% | - |

* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Staff

| Number of: | Full-time | Part-time |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Staff, including leader | 2 | 0 |
| Staff holding recognised childcare qualifications | 2 | 0 |
| New appointments within previous 12 months | 1 | 0 |

| Number of: ** | |
|----------------------|---|
| Students | 0 |
| Trainees | 0 |

** Total placements since September of current year

3. Details of Sessions

| Duration of morning session | Duration of afternoon session | Number of days open in previous year |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 2 ³ / ₄ hours | - | 199 |

4. Parental Questionnaires

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Number issued to parents: | 15 |
| Percentage returned: | 33.3% |
| Number of written comments: | 1 |

NAÍScoil AN LÓISTE ÚIR, BELFAST, BT14 6BP (1AB-0428)

1. The pre-school centre is accommodated in a mobile classroom within the grounds of the 174 Trust complex, just off the Antrim Road. It provides a pre-school curriculum experienced through early immersion in the Irish language with Irish as the medium for communication and interaction. Since the last inspection there have been several staffing changes including a change in the pre-school room leader, and a new early years specialist (EYS) who took up post in February 2008. The outdoor area has been developed to create a growing area.

2. The parents, staff and management group were given the opportunity to express their views about the Naíscoil through the inspection questionnaires. The small number of responses have been taken into account as part of the inspection and any issues raised have been shared with the staff and management.

3. The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection has some strengths. The Naíscoil has some appropriate policies and procedures for child protection. Some additions are needed to ensure they are sufficiently detailed, including the procedures for reporting concerns. The inspection evidence indicates that some further action is needed to ensure the training for staff is fully up-to-date to provide sufficient detail that they all have a shared understanding of the written policies and procedures.

4. The Naíscoil's programme for the promotion of health and well-being has strengths, with a developing commitment to encourage the pupils to eat healthily and be physically active. The children are provided with a healthy break and have regular opportunities for outdoor energetic play.

5. The main strengths within the Naiscoil's educational and pastoral provision are as follows.

- The centre has a friendly, relaxed atmosphere based on very good relationships between the staff and the children. The children are well behaved and responsive to the adults.
- The staff have worked hard, with the advice and guidance of their EYS, to enhance the playroom creating an attractive and stimulating learning environment.
- Satisfactory opportunities for learning were observed in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Particular strengths included the informal promotion of the children's independence and social skills, language development and early mathematical ideas through the play, and the enjoyable group story and rhyme session.
- Most children demonstrated good levels of co-operative and concentrated play throughout the session.
- The children exhibit a good level of understanding of the Irish language through their responses to the staff.
- There were many examples when the staff promoted language and learning as they engaged effectively with the children during their play.

6. The inspection identified areas for improvement. The following are the most important areas that need attention.

- The staff need to continue to work closely with their EYS to develop the planning, evaluation and assessment methods in order to ensure that the programme progresses appropriately and that children's individual needs are recognised and met.
- The staff need to develop their skills in identifying and supporting children with additional needs.
- The leadership and management of the Naíscoil needs to be developed at all levels in order to bring about continuous and sustained improvement.

7. There has been little development work to improve the quality of the provision since the last inspection. The turnover of EYS support has impacted negatively on the development of the Naíscoil's provision. The recently appointed EYS is providing good advice and guidance. The EYS, leader and management all need to work together to draw up a development plan with associated action plans and success criteria to make the necessary improvements.

8. The Naíscoil has strengths in many aspects of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified a few areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed to meet effectively the needs of all the children.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the Naíscoil's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS

- The staff need to carry out a risk assessment on the adjoining garden area before allowing access by the children.

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