

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Naíscóil an Lonnain, Belfast

Report of an Inspection  
in November 2012



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



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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school setting:</b>	Naíscoil an Lonnain
<b>Address:</b>	61 Falls Road BELFAST BT12 4PD
<b>Management Type:</b>	Committee

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	22 November 2012
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	March 2008

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
attending the pre-school setting	22	-
in their immediate pre-school year	15	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	14	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	11	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0	-
with English as an additional language	0	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
<b>Attendance:</b>		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	92.44%	-

\* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

\*\* 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	3	0
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	3	0
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	1	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	3	0

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	0
Trainees	0

\*\*\* 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>
3½ hours	-	170

## 4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued to parents:	22
Percentage returned	27%%
Number of written comments:	3

## 1. Introduction

Naíscoil an Lonnain is situated in a classroom in Gaelscoil an Lonnain on the Falls Road, Belfast. Since the last inspection in March 2008 a new leader and two new assistants have been appointed. At the time of the inspection, seven two year olds had recently joined the pre-school children.

## 2. Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from in-class observations and from a range of documentation provided by the playgroup.

The views of the parents, staff, and management group were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Twenty-two questionnaires were issued to the parents and six were returned with a small number of written comments. The parents expressed satisfaction with the provision within the naíscoil; in particular they praised the caring staff. All of the staff and a small number of the management group also returned the questionnaires with written comments.

## 3. Overall finding of the inspection

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

Summary of key findings

Children's Achievements Quality of Provision Leadership and management	Inadequate Satisfactory Inadequate
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## KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

### 4. Children's Achievements

**The quality of the children's achievements is inadequate.**

- The children are generally well-settled for the time of year and are beginning to develop positive attitudes to their learning. At times, during the session observed, a significant minority of the children engaged in sustained purposeful play and worked collaboratively with the adults and with each other. However, there were too many occasions when, due to the age of the children and the activities on offer, many of the children did not settle to any of the activities and, at times, a few disrupted the play of other children.
- The majority of the children do not demonstrate an understanding of the daily routines and have difficulty with their self management of toys and resources.
- The majority of the children are developing a good understanding of spoken Irish and respond well to the effective interactions of the staff.

## 5. Provision for Learning

### **The quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory.**

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the naíscoil is satisfactory. There is a caring ethos and very good working relationships at all levels. The staff need to develop a consistent approach to managing the behaviour of all the children.
- During the inspection, the interactions of the staff with the children ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. In the best practice the staff modelled good play, developed the children's language and demonstrated an inclusive approach to involving the children in play.
- The staff have worked hard to create a bright and stimulating environment for the children.
- A good start has been made by the staff in developing a systematic approach to observing the children at play and to recording their responses. It will be important for the staff to continue this development to include planning for the two year old children within the group and to ensure that the information gathered impacts on improving the naíscoil's provision for all the children.
- The quality of the staff's spoken Irish is very good. The staff use Irish consistently throughout the session.
- The children are provided with a healthy snack and regular physical activity. The staff have appropriately identified the development of outdoor play as a priority.

## 6. Leadership and Management

### **The quality of leadership and management is inadequate.**

- The new leader and staff are supported well by an effective early years specialist from Altram; they are beginning to develop a culture of self-evaluation. The naíscoil has a three year development plan with appropriate action plans in place.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the naíscoil has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.
- The naíscoil has developed good links with parents including the on-site facilitation of the delivery of the Barnados Full Service Community Network Programme.
- The management of the naíscoil need to urgently review the length of the session and the mixed provision for the pre-school and two-year old children in order to bring about further improvements in the children's learning experiences.

## CONCLUSION

In almost all of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this naíscóil is inadequate; the areas for improvement outweigh the strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified significant areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching and leadership and management, which need to be addressed urgently if the naíscóil is to meet effectively the needs of all of the children.

The areas for improvement are:

- the need for the staff to further develop the planning and assessment methods to meet the individual needs of all the children, including the two year olds;
- the need for the staff to develop and implement a more consistent approach to behaviour management; and
- the need to further develop the provision for outdoor play.

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



**ACCOMMODATION**

- The toilet provision outside of the playroom requires relocation to ensure that the most effective use of staff time is in learning rather than supervision beyond the playroom. The management also needs to review the handwashing facilities for the children within the naiscoil's playroom.

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