

# Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



## Naíscoil an Iúir, Newry, County Down

Irish-medium voluntary playgroup DE Ref No (5BB-0235)

Report of an Inspection in January 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



# CONTENTS

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Context	1
2. Views of parents and staff	1
3. Focus of the inspection	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	1
5. Outcomes for learners	1
6. Quality of provision	2
7. Leadership and management	2
8. Safeguarding	3
9. Overall effectiveness	3

## **Appendices**

- A. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- B. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

## 1. Context

Naíscoil an Iúir is an Irish-medium voluntary playgroup accommodated within Bunscoil an Iúir in Newry. The children attending the naíscoil come from the city of Newry and the surrounding rural area. One new member of staff has been appointed since the last inspection.

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending part-time	15
Funded by Department of Education	15
With English as an additional language	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	#
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	N/A
Number of days open in previous school year	185

**Source:** data provided by the setting.

# fewer than 5

N/A not available

## 2. Views of parents and staff

A majority of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire; the responses were wholly positive. The parents expressed their satisfaction with all aspects of the naíscoil and commented in particular on the professional, caring staff. The questionnaire responses and any issues arising were shared with the leader and a representative from the management committee.

## 3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all learners, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- outcomes for the children;
- quality of provision for learning; and
- leadership and management.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
<b>Quality of provision</b>	Good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Important areas for improvement

## 5. Outcomes for learners

- Almost all of the children are achieving good standards across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. They have good levels of independence as they: choose where they wish to play; put on their own aprons and coats; and, follow well the established routines within the naíscoil. Most of the children engage in sustained, collaborative play and are developing good friendships with each other.

- Almost all of the children have a good understanding of the Irish spoken to them and they are beginning to use single words independently in Irish. They enjoy singing a range of familiar songs and rhymes in Irish throughout the session. Most of the children have a keen interest in books as they browse through books independently during the transition routine and participate enthusiastically during the large-group story. While most of the children's representational artwork is of a good standard, they do not select independently tools and materials to express their own creative ideas or extend further their own learning.
- The children are developing a good understanding of early mathematical concepts and the language, in Irish and English, associated with shape, number, money and measures as they play collaboratively in the soil, water, construction and role-play areas.
- Almost all of the children have well-developed fine motor skills as they: complete jigsaws; weave; put fruit onto sticks; and, use with ease a range of small tools and utensils during role play.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- The staff have introduced a new approach to short-term planning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. They record relevant observations of the children's learning and use photographic evidence appropriately to support their observations. The information gathered through observations is not yet used effectively or consistently enough to inform the planning and to meet the individual needs of all the children.
- The staff have created an attractive and well-organised indoor learning environment with an appropriate range of commercial and natural resources that provide opportunities for learning across the curriculum. The naíscoil has access to both indoor and outdoor facilities in the bunscoil which are used for physical, energetic play; however, the children do not currently have enough opportunities to engage in a range of play experiences outdoors that reflect more fully the breadth of the pre-school curriculum.
- The routines are well-embedded and songs and rhymes are used effectively to aid smooth transitions and to consolidate the children's Irish language vocabulary. The quality of the staff interactions with the children is mostly good; they are competent Irish speakers and use Irish in most of their interactions with the children. The staff are supportive and pastoral on all occasions in their interactions with the children and respond well to the children's needs and interests.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the naíscoil's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning and teaching, and outcomes owing to the well-established, caring relationships and fully inclusive environment.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The process of self-evaluation leading to improvement is underdeveloped. Although a start has been made to development planning, with the support of the early years' specialist from Altram, the staff do not yet have a shared understanding of the process of planning for improvement and the use of effective self-evaluation to monitor and evaluate the impact on the quality of provision and the outcomes for the children.

- The staff and management committee work collegially in the best interests of the children and are committed to the life and work of the naíscoil. The management committee do not currently play an active role in the improvement process within the naíscoil.
- There are good links with a range of stakeholders that impact positively on the children in the naíscoil. The staff maintain partnerships with the parents through, for example, an informative monthly newsletter and a mobile phone communication App. Parents are encouraged to come into the naíscoil to share their experience and expertise in a range of areas with the children. There are also good links with the adjoining bunscoil which support the children and parents effectively with transition to primary education.

## **8. Safeguarding**

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the relevant Departments. However, the naíscoil needs to:
  - ensure that all relevant child protection and safeguarding training requirements for designated members of the management committee are updated; and
  - ensure greater rigour in the completion of risk assessments for outings.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Naíscoil an lúir needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are:

- to develop a shared understanding and implement the process of planning for improvement and the use of effective self-evaluation to monitor and evaluate the impact on the quality of provision and the outcomes for the children;
- to continue to develop the cycle of planning, observations and assessment to improve further the provision across all areas and the learning experiences for the children; and
- to strengthen the governance provided by the management committee of the Naíscoil.

The ETI will monitor and report on the naíscoil's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

### Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/inspection-and-self-evaluation-framework-isef-effective-practice-and-self-evaluation>.

Inspectors observed learning and teaching through play, the children's achievements, progression and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, and held formal and informal discussions with staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with those involved with leadership and management, including the management committee; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

## 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 management<sup>1</sup>:

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

<sup>1</sup> 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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