

# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Naíscóil na mBeann, Kilkeel, County Down

Irish Medium Playgroup DE ref no (5BB-0562)

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  
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CUSTOMER  
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EXCELLENCE



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## 1. Context

Naíscoil na mBeann is accommodated in a modular building located on the site of Gaelscoil na mBeann. The naíscoil has access to an adjacent outdoor play area. The children come from the wider surrounding area. There have been a number of changes in leadership since the previous inspection in 2012. The current leader was appointed in October 2018.

<b>Number of children:</b>	
Attending part-time	19
Under 3 years of age*	8
Funded by Department of Education	19
With statement of special educational needs	0
With English as an additional language	1

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	85
Number of days open in previous school year	185

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

\* On 1 July.

## 2. Views of parents and staff

A minority of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were positive about all aspects of the life and work of the playgroup. In a small number of written comments, the parents highlighted the supportive staff and the progress made by their children in speaking Irish since starting the playgroup. The staff highlighted the good working relationships among the staff team. The questionnaire responses were shared with the leader and the chair of 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>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Important areas for improvement

## **5. Outcomes for learners**

- Almost all of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, are making good progress across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum. They settle quickly to their chosen activities and engage purposefully throughout the session. A small number of children still require adult support and intervention in order to sustain purposeful play.
- The children have good levels of understanding of Irish for the time of year and are confident in approaching the adults for help and support. Most of the children respond well to instructions in Irish and are beginning to answer using Irish words and phrases. The children listen well during the group story time and join enthusiastically in the songs and rhymes.
- The majority of the children have good levels of independence and can self-register, label their own work, access resources and assist in the preparation of snack. While the majority of the children joined in the tidy-up routine, a significant minority of the children did not show appropriate respect and regard during the session for the equipment and resources in the playroom and the creations of other children.
- Most of the children understand some early mathematical concepts including aspects of number, measures and shape. They have good fine-motor skills and develop well their gross motor skills outdoors through running, climbing and balancing.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- There are important areas for improvement across the majority of the areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff do not make sufficient use of the Pre-school Curricular Guidance and long-term planning and, as a result, the short-term planning for both indoor and outdoor play does not identify effectively enough both the intended learning and the role of the adult in supporting progression.
- The staff have recently changed the method of recording observations of the children's learning to make the process more manageable and make better use of the assessments to inform their planning. This process is not yet embedded and requires further work.
- The staff have good to very good levels of spoken Irish and their interactions with the children are effective in promoting enjoyment and curiosity in learning. They do not make sufficient use of songs and rhymes in Irish throughout the session and there are missed opportunities for the staff to focus on developing the children's understanding of early mathematical language.
- The recent re-organisation of the playroom provides clearly defined areas for learning and allows the children's play to flow well across the room. The children's work is attractively displayed. The ongoing development of the outdoor play area is improving the quality of the children's learning opportunities outdoors.
- The children who have additional learning needs are identified early and the staff work with both the parents and external agencies to provide appropriate support. The staff do not make sufficient use of the observations of the identified children to monitor their progress.

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare does not impact positively enough on learning and teaching, and the outcomes for the children. The staff are not consistent enough in their use of positive behaviour strategies to ensure that the children all show appropriate respect for the resources and equipment.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- There are important areas for improvement in the leadership of the playgroup. The recently appointed leader and staff are developing a collaborative team approach to self-evaluation processes. With the very good support provided by the early years specialist from ALTRAM and the chair of management committee, the staff have identified appropriate areas for improvement. There is evidence of recent improvements impacting positively on the quality of the layout of the playroom and the outdoor play provision. However, the action plans do not focus sufficiently on the development of the associated learning and evaluating the impact of the actions to promote improvement on the outcomes for the children.
- There are good links with the parents who are kept well informed by the monthly newsletters with useful phonetic pronunciations of key Irish vocabulary and phrases for those parents who do not speak Irish. A range of visitors to the setting during the 'people who help us' topic has enhanced the children's learning experiences. The playgroup has very good links with the adjacent gaelscoil to which most of the children transfer.

## **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, Naíscoil na mBeann needs to:
  - ensure that the newly appointed designated and deputy officers complete their required training at the earliest opportunity;
  - update its Intimate Care policy to reflect better the practice in the setting; and
  - update the complaints policy to reflect fully current guidance.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Naíscoil na mBeann needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are:

- to develop further the use of positive behaviour strategies in order to ensure that all of the children show appropriate respect for the resources and equipment;
- to develop the staff's understanding and use of the pre-school curriculum in planning for indoor and outdoor play and identify more clearly both the intended learning and the role of the adult in supporting progression; and

- to develop the action planning process with a greater focus on learning and evaluate more effectively the impact of the actions to promote improvement on the outcomes for the children and the quality of the provision.

### 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 chair of the management group; 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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