

Education and Training Inspectorate PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Naíscoil Shliabh gCuilinn, Jonesborough, County Down

Voluntary pre-school DE Ref No: 5AB-0561

Report of an Inspection in December 2019



Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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CONTENTS

Section	Page
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	2
6. Quality of provision	2
7. Leadership and management	3
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 Shliabh gCuilinn is a voluntary playgroup situated in The Pastoral Centre in the village of Jonesborough, near Newry. There is a new staff team in place since the time of the last inspection.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	24
Under 3 years of age*	#
Funded by Department of Education	22
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	#
With English as an additional language	#

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	95
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	91
Number of days open in previous school year	185

Source: data provided by the setting.

* On 1 July.

** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

fewer than 5

2. Views of parents and staff

All of the parents and staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses were wholly positive. More than half of the parents included additional written comments in which they highlighted their appreciation of the caring, approachable and dedicated staff and commented upon the wide range of high quality learning experiences provided for their children. A summary of the questionnaire responses was shared with the leader and representatives 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

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Outcomes for learners

- Almost all of the children, including those requiring additional support with aspects of their learning, are making very good progress in their learning and development. The children follow confidently the well-embedded routines in the pre-school and make smooth transitions around the playroom and from indoor to outdoor play. They co-operate well with the staff and one another, showing respect and care for each other and the environment. The children's independence and self-management skills are developing well as they: self-register on arrival and for break; choose where they wish to play; and access freely additional resources to initiate or extend their own play.
- The children are developing well their creativity and curiosity. They engage in high quality concentrated and collaborative play particularly in the construction, role play and creative areas. The children's representational artwork is of a very good standard and most of them engage in a range of purposeful mark making opportunities across the playroom. They are developing an awareness of the Irish language and can, for example, sing rhymes and songs, count, name colours and discuss in order the main events from a story read to them in Irish. During the inspection, the children did not access books independently.
- The children have a very good understanding of the mathematical concepts and language, in both Irish and English, associated with number, measures and shape and they use their mathematical learning well during play.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff plan a good quality programme for play across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. Their interactions are mostly of a good quality; they know the children well and, in the best practice, facilitate productive play by encouraging the children to think independently and problem solve. Although the medium-term planning guides well the learning and teaching, the short-term planning is not sufficiently detailed and focussed on the learning for the children. Consequently there were a few missed opportunities by the staff to build further on the children's learning, extend their vocabulary and provide additional challenge. In addition to the areas of learning, as set out in the Northern Ireland Pre-school Curricular Guidance, the children are also introduced naturally to the Irish language during the session, and elements of the provision, such as numbers, songs, rhymes and stories, are delivered bilingually.
- The staff have created an attractive, well-organised and very well-resourced learning environment which promotes the development of the children's creativity, independence and self-management skills. The children's independent representational artwork is celebrated throughout the playroom. The staff have identified appropriately the need to improve further the provision for learning outdoors.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the pre-school's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning and teaching, and outcomes. The stimulating and well-resourced environment and effective working relationships support the children in developing their confidence and independence.

7. Leadership and management

- Almost all of the leadership roles, both within the playgroup and at committee level, are relatively new. All staff, and those involved at management level, are professional, pro-active and work effectively as a team in the best interests of the playgroup. They articulate a shared vision for the future of the playgroup and have established, over the past two years, good processes for self-evaluation and action planning. They are supported well in their work by an early years' specialist from Altram.
- There are very effective links with the parents who contribute to the life and work of the playgroup in a range of ways and who are kept well-informed through a detailed monthly newsletter and parent noticeboard. The playgroup has been involved in a number of initiatives to support parents as part of the Department of Education's 'Getting Ready to Learn' strategy including 'The Big Bedtime Read' and 'Education Works'.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the relevant departments.

9. Overall effectiveness

Naíscoil Shliabh gCuilinn demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.

There is an area for improvement that the playgroup has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area for improvement is:

- to ensure the short-term planning is more focussed on the intended learning in order to guide the staff better in their interactions and ensure appropriate challenge and progression across the pre-school year.

The ETI will monitor how the playgroup sustains improvement.

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; 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 management¹:

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

¹ 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:

<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>

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