

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Naíscoil an Traonaigh, Lios na Scéithe, Contae Fhear
Manach/County Fermanagh

Irish-medium pre-school DE Ref No (2BB-0484)

Report of an Inspection in March 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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1. Context

Naíscoil an Traonaigh is situated in modular accommodation in the grounds of Bunscoil an Traonaigh, in Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh. There has been a period of instability in relation to staffing over recent years. The current leadership have been in post for two years and one year, respectively.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	12
Funded by Department of Education	12

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	0
Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	87
Number of days open in previous school year	183

Source: data provided by the setting.

2. Views of parents and staff

One-half of the parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses were wholly positive about the life and work of the naíscoil. In their written comments, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the professional and caring staff. A summary of the questionnaire responses 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

Overall effectiveness	Important areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Quality of provision	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement

5. Outcomes for learners

- Almost all of the children sustain purposeful play and are developing appropriate social skills as they play collaboratively with each other and engage confidently with the adults. They have good levels of independence as they: choose where they wish to play; follow well the established routines and transitions during the day; carry out their daily designated roles as helpers; and, put on and remove their outdoor clothing and boots. Most of the children are developing well their gross-motor, turn-taking and games skills alongside their resilience and personal safety strategies as they engage in physical, energetic play outdoors.

- The children are achieving good standards across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. They have a good understanding of the Irish spoken to them and use single words and short phrases independently in Irish. Most of the children have a keen interest in books; they access them independently for quiet reading and enjoy sharing and talking about books with each other.
- Most of the children engage enthusiastically in role play, indoors and outdoors, and enjoy making music and performing with a range of musical instruments. They join in the singing of familiar songs and rhymes in Irish throughout the session.
- Almost all of the children are interested in their immediate environment and are developing their sense of curiosity and problem-solving skills as they play with the sand, water, and construction resources indoors and with the mud kitchen outdoors. They have a good understanding of key mathematical concepts associated with number, shape and measures.

6. Quality of provision

- The cycle of planning, observation and assessment is an important area for improvement. While the interactions between the adults and the staff are mostly good, the short-term planning does not guide sufficiently the learning and teaching particularly in identifying the role of the adult and the specific language to be promoted. The staff record observations of the children's learning across the curriculum; however, they do not use this information effectively enough to track progress in learning or to inform future planning.
- The staff have created a stimulating learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, and make good use of the space available to them. There is an interesting range of both natural and commercial resources which provide opportunities for learning across the curriculum. The children's artwork is too adult-directed; they do not select independently the resources and materials they require to initiate or extend their own creative work and express their own ideas.
- The well-embedded routines promote effectively the development of the children's independence, language and mathematical learning. There are smooth transitions around the playroom, and from indoor to outdoor play. The outdoor play session is particularly effective and provides opportunities for the children to engage in collaborative, free-play across all areas of the curriculum.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the naíscoil's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on the outcomes for the children. The sensory room in particular provides a quiet space for the children and encourages them to recognise and regulate their own emotions and respect each other's feelings and emotions.

7. Leadership and management

- The process of self-evaluation leading to improvement is underdeveloped. The early years' specialist from Altram has provided effective support for the staff in establishing a development planning process. The staff can articulate an understanding of self-evaluation and have evidence of improvements made. The current development planning process is informal and not consistent enough to monitor and evaluate the impact of the actions to promote improvement in the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the children.

- The staff and recently constituted management committee work well, and collegially, in the best interests of the children and have a shared vision for the future of the naíscoil.
- There are good links with the adjoining Gaelscoil that support the children effectively with their transition to Rang 1. The staff value their partnerships with the parents and maintain these through, for example, stay-and-play sessions, a parental comment board and a monthly newsletter. It will be important that the staff continue to develop links with other pre-school providers and avail of opportunities to observe practice in other settings.

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 an Traonaigh needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the children.

The areas for improvement are to:

- improve the short-term planning to guide more effectively the learning and teaching and raise further the quality of the learning experiences and outcomes for the children; and
- develop a more robust, formal process of self-evaluation leading to improvement.

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 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 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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