

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Naíscoil na Tamhnaí Móire,
Tannaghmore, County Antrim

Irish-medium voluntary pre-school

Report of an Inspection in
June 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Naíscoil na Tamhnaí Móire is a voluntary Irish-medium pre-school playgroup which was established in September 2015. It is situated in the same grounds as St MacNissius' Primary School, in Tannaghmore, County Antrim.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Number of children: | Class 1 |
| Attending part-time | 19 |
| Under 3 years of age* | 8 |
| Funded by Department of Education | 11 |

| | |
|---|--|
| Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2. | |
| Average attendance for the previous year. | |
| Number of days open in previous school year | |

Source: data provided by the setting.

* On 1 July.

2. Views of parents and staff

A significant minority of parents and a majority of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses were wholly positive. The parents in particular commented on: the professional, caring and approachable staff; the wide range of learning experiences available to their children; and the effective and regular communication that the naíscoil maintains with them.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, 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 | Good |
| Quality of provision | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- Most of the children are well-settled and engage in purposeful play for extended periods; a small number of children however did not sustain interest in the activities for the duration of the free-play session. Almost all of the children display good social skills as they play and interact naturally with each other and talk confidently to the adults. Most of the children engage well in the transition and tidy-up routines and are developing well their independence and sense of responsibility.
- Almost all of the children have good communication skills and a good understanding of the Irish spoken to them; a small number of them are responding in Irish using single words or short phrases. The children's early mark-making and representational drawing is well developed and a small number of them avail of the range of opportunities to mark make during play. Most of the children listen attentively and participate in the group story session.
- Almost all of the children are developing a good understanding of the mathematical concepts of shape, measure and time, through play, dance and the daily routines.

6. Quality of provision

- The staff have created an attractive and stimulating learning environment in which the children's artwork is valued and displayed. The playroom is well-resourced and there is a good balance between the range of natural and synthetic resources available to the children.
- The staff develop learning skilfully, during most routines and transitions, using appropriate songs and rhymes; they also make very effective use of the visual timetable to develop further the children's language and mathematical learning. There are missed opportunities during the snack routine to maximise learning and promote further the children's independence and self-management skills.
- The staff have created an effective immersion environment and plan appropriately for the role of the adult according to their individual competence and confidence in Irish. The linguistic capacity of all staff is not consistently high, however they have identified this aspect as a area for improvement. The quality of staff interactions with the children is good; they engage well with the children during play and are effective role models on most occasions.
- The cycle of observation, assessment and planning is not sufficiently developed to meet the needs of all of the children and ensure progression in learning across all of the areas of the curriculum. There is a need to ensure that both the planning and the evaluations focus more explicitly on the learning. The use of observations to inform future planning should be more formal and more rigorous.
- There are a number of under age children attending the naíscóil. The staff respond well to their needs through, for example, their interactions and during the separate story session. The planning does not ensure sufficient variety and progression in the learning experiences for those children who will spend two years in this setting.

- The quality of care and welfare impacts well on the quality of the provision in the naíscoil and on the outcomes for the children. There is an inclusive, welcoming and respectful ethos in which all children and staff are valued. All staff use an agreed and consistent approach to promoting positive behaviour to which the children respond well.

7. Leadership and management

- The recently-appointed leader and staff are fully committed to the life and work of the naíscoil and work effectively as team. They are supported well by their management committee, the senior leadership of the adjoining primary school and their early years specialist from Altram.
- A meaningful start has been made to self-evaluation and development planning, with support from Altram, and appropriate action plans are in place; but aspects of the provision are not well enough developed. In order to improve, the leader, staff and early years specialist have identified the need for a more robust system of evidence gathering and consultation.
- Effective links have been established with the parents through, for example, informative newsletters and regular meetings. There are also effective links with the primary schools to which the children transfer. The links with the adjoining primary school in particular, support the children and their parents effectively with transition into Irish-medium primary education.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

CONCLUSION

8. Overall effectiveness

Naíscoil na Tamhnaí Móire demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.

There is an area for improvement that the naíscoil has demonstrated the capacity to address, which is to develop further the cycle of observation, assessment and planning in order to meet better the needs of all of the children and ensure progression in learning across all of the areas of the curriculum.

The ETI will monitor how the naíscoil sustains improvement.

Information on sessions and staff**Duration of sessions**

| |
|----------------------|
| Part-time: am |
| 9.15am-11.45am |

Details of staff

| Number of: | Part-time |
|---|------------------|
| Staff including, Teachers/Leaders | 3 |
| Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification | 3 |
| Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification | 1 |
| New appointments within the previous 12 months | 1 |

Source: data provided by the setting.

* Total placements since September of current year

Inspection method and evidence base

The effective practice and self-evaluation questions which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school settings, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *The Pre-school Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework* at: <https://www.eti.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

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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes, on provision and on leadership and management:

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| Outstanding |
| Very good |
| Good |
| Important area(s) for improvement |
| Requires significant improvement |
| Requires urgent improvement |

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

| |
|--|
| The nursery school / playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school / playgroup sustains improvement. |
| The nursery school /playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the nursery school/ playgroup sustains improvement. |
| The nursery school/ playgroup needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's/ playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection. |
| The nursery school / playgroup 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 nursery school's / playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection. |

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