

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Naíscóil an Iúir, Newry

Report of an Inspection in  
May 2014

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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



## 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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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## 1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of pre-school centres, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI's publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#)

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

The arrangements for this inspection included:

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

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	14	*	21% <sup>1</sup>	*
Staff	*	*	*	*

\* fewer than 5

All of the parents who responded to the questionnaire were positive about all aspects of the life and work of the naíscoil.

## 2. Context

Naíscoil an Iúir is situated in a classroom in Bunscoil an Iúir on Kilmorey Street in Newry city. The naíscoil moved location to the current premises since the last inspection. Fourteen of the children are in their immediate pre-school year and three of the children have English as an additional language.

## 3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards;
- the quality of provision; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

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<sup>1</sup> The ETI is trialling a new range of methods to collect the views of parents/carers and, as a result, the percentage of questionnaires returned may be low.

#### 4. Overall finding

<b>Overall Performance Level</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>Achievements and Standards</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>Provision</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

#### Key findings of the inspection

##### 5. Achievements and standards

- All of the children are very well settled and engage in concentrated, purposeful play for sustained periods of time. They play collaboratively, share materials and take turns readily; their social skills are developing very well. They respond well to the established routines, make choices about the activities they engage in and the materials they use and demonstrate very good levels of independence.
- All of the children show a very good understanding of the spoken Irish and a small number are beginning to use the language naturally in their play. They make good use of the wide range of books available throughout the playroom and the standard of their representational drawing and early mark making is very good. The children take pride in their creative work and spend concentrated periods of time completing their work.
- Almost all of the children use mathematical language with confidence; they count, recognise colours and use prepositional language appropriately during play. They have a very good understanding of key mathematical concepts related to size and comparison. They are imaginative and creative in their play and often lead the learning by following their own ideas.

##### 6. Provision

- The staff work hard to provide an interesting, language rich and well-organised learning environment and use well all of the available space in the playroom. They are currently developing the outdoor play area. They value and celebrate well the children's work in attractive displays around the room.
- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently of a high quality. They provide a rich immersion environment through the consistent use of the Irish language. The staff model good play and develop the children's language and thinking skills through sustained discussions and open-ended questions. They skilfully facilitate the children's creativity in play by listening carefully to the children, responding appropriately to their ideas and by allowing the children the freedom to continue independently with their play without adult intervention.
- The daily snack and other necessary routines are well-organised and provide excellent opportunities for the children to continue to develop their independence, social and conversational skills.

- The children's educational programme is well-balanced with very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. A particular strength of the provision is the development of early mathematical concepts and early language skills.
- The staff team have developed a comprehensive approach to planning, to observing the children at play and to recording their responses. The staff use the children's responses effectively to respond to the children's interests and to assess the children's progress in their learning.
- The naíscail has a positive, warm and inclusive ethos; the staff treat all of the children with care and respect, and there are very good working relationships between the staff and the children. The children are secure and relaxed with the adults and turn to them easily for help and support.
- Very good attention is given to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the provision of a healthy snack and a daily session of physical activity.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leader brings a high level of experience and expertise to the leadership role and sets a positive tone for the management of the naíscail. She is well-supported by the skilful staff who have developed a strong team approach to all aspects of the work of the naíscail. The staff has made a good start to the process of self-evaluation and development planning and have appropriately identified areas for improvement within the setting's provision.
- The naíscail has been supported well by the early years specialist from Altram. In particular the staff and early years specialist have worked together to improve the processes for observing, recording and assessing the children's progress and on developing the outdoor play provision.
- The naíscail has very good pastoral and curricular links with the local bunscoil to provide a smooth transition for the children. The staff has developed very good and effective links with the parents. Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress and they are informed about aspects of the provision and the work of the naíscail through a regular, informative newsletter and the monthly 'Show and Tell' event. The naíscail has good links with the local community and outside agencies in order to improve the learning experiences and to meet the needs of the children.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the naíscail has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

## **8. Conclusion**

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this naíscail is very good. The naíscail is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of pre-school setting:</b>	Naiscoil an Iúir
<b>Address:</b>	74 Kilmorey Street NEWRY BT34 2DH
<b>Management Type:</b>	Voluntary

<b>Date of inspection:</b>	1 May 2014
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	November 2005

### 1. Details of Children

<b>Total number of children:</b>	<b>am session</b>	<b>pm session</b>
attending the pre-school setting	16	-
in their immediate pre-school year	14	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	14	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	1	-
with a statement of special educational needs	0	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	-
with English as an additional language	3	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0	-
<b>Attendance:</b>		
attendance** of funded children for the previous school year	87.1%	-

\* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

\*\* Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

## 2. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff, including leader		3
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	0	3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	0
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	1
Trainees	0

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

## 3. Details of Sessions

<b>Duration of morning session</b>	<b>Duration of afternoon session</b>	<b>Number of days open in previous year</b>
3¾ hours	-	188



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