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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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Naíscoil Chamlocha
Newry**

January 2010

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF NAÍScoil CHAMLOCHA, NEWRY, CO DOWN, BT35 7JP (5AB-0544)

The inspection of Naíscoil Chamlocha in January 2008 highlighted strengths in the centre's ethos, the friendly children, the many instances of concentrated play, the satisfactory to good opportunities for learning in most of the pre-school curriculum and the committed leader and hard-working staff. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the quality of the staff interactions through the medium of the Irish language in extending effectively the children's language; and
- the methods of planning and assessment.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the centre has taken place:

- there have been several staff changes including the appointment of a new leader and an assistant;
- an extensive range of new and updated pastoral and educational policies have been put in place;
- the management committee has provided focused time for staff to meet and plan;
- additional educational resources have been provided by the management committee;
- a three-year development plan, supported by appropriate action plans, has been put in place with the assistance of the early years specialist (EYS); and
- all the staff are attending regular Irish language classes.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out two monitoring visits on 18 May 2009 and 13 November 2009 which indicated that limited progress had been made in the areas for improvement. As a result the inspection team met with representatives of the management committee on 23 June 2009 to discuss their findings. The inspection team carried out a further visit to the centre on 29 January 2010.

The following are the most important improvements since the original inspection.

- A range of pastoral and educational policies and procedures have been put in place and are used effectively to guide the work of the staff and management committee.
- An appropriate development plan and associated action plan, is in place and is strategically guiding the staff and management in making improvements in the centre.
- The quality of the learning environment has been greatly enhanced by improved caretaking and cleaning, further use of display areas for children's individual work and the addition of new educational resources.
- A new format of detailed long-, medium- and short-term planning has been developed and is beginning to guide the staff more effectively in their day-to-day work with the children.

- The regular and appropriate support provided by the EYS is having a positive impact on the overall quality of the provision. The staff and EYS are working together to identify and implement the necessary improvements required.
- On the day of the visit the staff interactions were more effective in promoting settled and purposeful play and extending the children's language during the free play session.
- The leader is using appropriately her developing skills in the Irish language to good effect to support the children in their learning. There is evidence that the children are beginning to use basic vocabulary and short phrases in Irish. Many of the children respond appropriately to the staff's instructions in Irish.

The follow-up inspection identified areas for improvement. The following are the most important areas that need attention. The staff need to:

- develop further the approach to the observations and assessment of the children's progress across all areas of the pre-school curriculum, and to link the information more effectively to their short-term planning;
- continue to improve the quality and consistency of their use of the Irish language; and
- continue to resource all areas of the pre-school curriculum and review the timetable and routines of the day to ensure optimum use of the resources and time available.

In most of the areas inspected the quality of the education provided by the Naíscoil remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The Naíscoil has demonstrated evidence of improvement but areas for further improvement in leadership and management, standards and learning and teaching remain to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor the Naíscoil's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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