

EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION

Naíscoil na mBeann, Kilkeel, County Down

Irish-medium Voluntary Playgroup, DE Ref No 5BB-0562

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in October 2022



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Follow-up to the inspection of Naíscoil na mBeann, Kilkeel, BT34 4NL (5BB-0562)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Naíscoil na mBeann in January 2019¹, which concluded that the naíscoil needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners, namely to:

- develop further the use of positive behaviour strategies in order to ensure that all of the children show appropriate respect for the resources and equipment;
- develop the staff's understanding and use of the pre-school curriculum in planning for indoor and outdoor play and identify more clearly both the intended learning and the role of the adult in supporting progression; and
- develop the action planning process with a greater focus on learning and evaluate more effectively the impact of the actions to promote improvement on the outcomes for the children and the quality of the provision.

The naíscoil's action plans were adjusted in response to the feedback given by the ETI. The naíscoil's development plan was also adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in February 2020, a monitoring visit in February 2022 and a follow-up inspection in October 2022.

In the interval since the inspection, the naíscoil has received external support from an early years specialist (EYS) from Altram in relation to planning, observations and self-evaluation.

Over the same period, the key changes and actions which have affected the work of the naíscoil are:

- a new leader was appointed in September 2021;
- additional weekly hours have been allocated by the management committee to allow staff to work together as a team on planning for learning and strategic planning; and
- all of the staff attended a wide range of capacity-building opportunities, provided by Altram, on aspects of leadership and management and provision for learning.

As a consequence of the external support and the key changes and actions taken within the naíscoil, there have been improvements in the quality of education as reported in the key findings below.

¹ [Pre-School Inspection – Naíscoil na mBeann, Kilkeel, County Down \(etini.gov.uk\)](https://etini.gov.uk)

Key findings

The outcomes for learners have improved and are now very good. Almost all of the children engage in purposeful, collaborative play in both the indoor and outdoor environments. They are developing very well their independence, perseverance, curiosity and thinking skills as they initiate and extend their own play, particularly within the role-play, construction and creative play areas. The children are beginning to mark-make for a range of purposes and their representational artwork is of a high standard for the time of year. They have a good understanding of the Irish spoken to them by the adults and are using single words and phrases naturally in Irish as they speak with each other and with the staff.

The quality of provision has improved and is now very good. The attractive, stimulating and well-resourced learning environments (indoors and outdoors) provide opportunities for the children to engage in high quality, collaborative and investigative play. The cycle of planning, observation and assessment guides very effectively the learning and teaching across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. All of the staff are consistent in their approaches to promoting positive behaviour and they interact pastorally and skilfully with the children at all times.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management have improved and are now very good. The naíscoil staff work very effectively as a team and are supported very well by their early years specialist from Altram. There is a collegial approach to self-evaluation and a shared vision for continuous improvement at all levels. A process of ongoing self-evaluation has become an integral part of the life and work of the naíscoil, to which all staff contribute on a regular basis, and is leading to sustained improvement in the quality of the provision and outcomes achieved.

Overall effectiveness

Naíscoil na mBeann now has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interests of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the naíscoil sustains improvement.

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