

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Naíscoil an Chréagáin,
Silverbridge, County Armagh

Irish-medium voluntary pre-school

Report of an Inspection in
April 2018



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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1. Context

Naíscoil an Chréagáin is an Irish-medium pre-school playgroup located in Silverbridge Resource Centre, in the GAA grounds in Silverbridge, County Armagh. All of the current staff were in post at the time of the last inspection in 2011.

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending part-time	16
Funded by Department of Education	16
At CoP stages 3 or 4 *	#
At CoP stages 1 or 2 *	#

Average percentage attendance for the previous year.	N/A
Number of days open in previous school year	185

Source: data provided by the setting

* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

fewer than 5

N/A Not available

2. Views of parents and staff

A majority of the parents and staff responded to the confidential questionnaire; all of their responses were wholly positive about the life and work of the naíscoil. In the written comments, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the dedicated, hardworking staff and the good reputation of the naíscoil in the community.

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

- Most of the children are well-settled and are forming good friendships with one another; their behaviour is good. The children are happy in the naíscoil and approach the staff and visitors confidently to talk to them about their play.

- The children respond positively to the established routines of the naíscoil and are developing well their independence and fine motor skills, as they: engage in tidy-up time; select their own resources for play; pour their own drinks and butter their own bread; and independently label their own work.
- Most of the children are making good progress across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. During the inspection the children engaged in purposeful, sustained play most notably while playing with the dough, water, mathematical-based table-top games and outdoors at the construction area.
- The children understand the Irish spoken to them by the adults and a small number of them are beginning to respond in Irish using single words. All of the children join enthusiastically in the songs and rhymes in Irish. The children's early mark making and representational drawings are of a good and very good standard.

6. Quality of provision

- The recently introduced cycle of planning, observations and assessment is underdeveloped and does not guide the staff sufficiently in meeting the needs of all of the children. Although there is planning in place across all areas of the pre-school curriculum, both indoors and outdoors, the intended learning and associated evaluations are not clear enough.
- The organisation of the day and layout of the playroom require attention. Although the staff have provided a good range of natural and stimulating resources the layout of the room and lack of storage space create an over-cluttered learning environment. As a result there are limited opportunities for the children to extend independently their own learning and creativity and develop further their self-management skills and independence. There are also missed opportunities within the break routine for the staff to promote further the development of the children's independence, fine-motor skills, language and mathematical learning.
- The staff have a good standard of Irish and the quality of their interactions with the children is mostly good. At times however, the quality of the staff's questioning and interactions does not develop sufficiently the children's language and thinking skills.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the naíscoil's approach to care and welfare impacts positively on learning and teaching, and outcomes. The nurturing ethos within the naíscoil and the good relationships at all levels are strengths in the setting and, as a result, the children are confident in engaging with each other and adults.

7. Leadership and management

- The process of self-evaluation leading to improvement is inconsistent. Although there is evidence that the staff have carried out elements of self-evaluation and do reflect on their practice, there is a need to improve the quality and consistency of this practice and to use it more effectively to inform development planning and bring about improvements in the provision and outcomes for the children.

- All of the staff, the early years specialist from Altram and the management committee are committed to the naíscoil and work well collegially in the best interests of the children.
- There are very good links with the parents who are kept informed of the life and work of the naíscoil through social media and an informative newsletter. The parents also attend a range of workshops in the naíscoil. There are very good links with the local Gaelscoil to which a majority of the children transfer to Rang 1.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the relevant Departments. However, the naíscoil needs to ensure that all relevant safeguarding and child protection policies are up-to-date and reflect the most recent guidance.

9. Overall effectiveness

Naíscoil an Chréagáin needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are to:

- improve the cycle of planning, observations and assessment in order to improve the overall quality of provision and meet more effectively the needs of all the children;
- review the organisation of the day and the layout of the room to maximise the most effective use of time, resources and space; and
- develop a shared understanding of development planning and continuous effective 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 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 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.
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.
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.
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.

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