

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Naíscóil Chamlocha, Camlough,
Newry, Co Down

Report of an Inspection in
January 2015

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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
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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.

All of the parents and all of the staff who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about all aspects of the life and work of the naíscoil. They praised the caring and friendly staff and commented favourably on the use of the Irish language in the naíscoil.

2. Context

Naíscoil Chamlocha is located in Shane O'Neill's GAA grounds on the Newry Road, Camlough, County Down. In the interim period after the last inspection, a new leader has been appointed and an Irish language support worker has also been employed, on a part-time basis. The remaining staff were in post at the time of the last inspection.

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.

4. Overall findings

Overall Performance Level	Satisfactory
Achievements and Standards	Good
Provision	Satisfactory
Leadership and Management	Satisfactory

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are well settled and are secure in the routines of the day, such as snack and during transitions. Almost all of the children engage in purposeful, sustained play both of a solitary nature and collaboratively in pairs and small groups. They are developing positive attitudes to their learning and effective social skills as they play together with each other and form friendships.
- Most of the children have good language and communication skills and engage willingly in conversations with their peers and with adults. They show an understanding of the Irish spoken to them and respond in Irish when prompted. A majority of the children concentrate during group song and story time and participate enthusiastically. A number of the children are not yet ready to join in whole-group situations; it is important that the staff address this by offering a more appropriate range of learning activities matched more effectively to the individual needs of the children. The children's early mark making and writing are developing at an appropriate pace and most of the children can express their ideas well through representational drawings and paintings.
- The children use their mathematical knowledge and understanding during play, both indoors and outdoors, and during their snack routine. They are developing well their understanding and awareness of concepts and terminology related to shape and space, measures, sorting and number.
- The children are developing well their physical fine motor skills through activities such as threading, cutting, moulding and shaping. During the inspection, almost all of the children engaged in energetic physical play both indoors and outdoors.

6. Provision

- The staff have created an attractive and well-organised learning environment, with a range of interesting resources and materials that meet well the needs of most of the children. The children's work is valued and celebrated in attractive displays around the playroom.
- The organisation of the day needs reviewed, and in particular the use of the second room for story, singing and indoor physical activity, to ensure a more natural flow to the session and to extend the time available for free play. The snack routine provides satisfactory opportunities for the children to continue to develop their independence and their social and conversational skills.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is mostly of a good standard. There is variation in the competence and in the use of the Irish language by the staff. It will be important for all members of staff to continue to develop further their competence and confidence in spoken Irish in order to improve further both the quality of their interactions with the children and the overall quality of the immersion experience provided. The Irish-language support worker is an effective linguistic role model for the staff and children.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the naíscoil is good. There is a positive, warm and inclusive ethos and the staff treat the children with care and respect.

- The pre-school programme is well balanced and provides satisfactory opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff plan together, collate useful observations on the children and evaluate the quality of the provision regularly. To improve the provision further, the staff need to continue to develop the planning and the use made of evaluations and observations in order to meet better the needs of all the children and to ensure progression in their learning.
- The naíscoil gives good attention to healthy eating and to physical activity both in the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

7. Leadership and management

- The leader is committed to the life and work of the naíscoil and is supported well by the current management committee and her staff in all aspects of her work. The staff have made a satisfactory start to the process of self-evaluation and development planning; it will be important for the staff to continue to develop further the processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.
- There are good links with the parents and with the local Irish-medium primary school. The parents are kept informed about the life and work of the naíscoil through a number of initiatives and events, such as, an informative monthly newsletter, show and tell sessions and the weekly lending library.
- The early years specialist from Altram provides effective support to develop the provision in the naíscoil. There is evidence of the positive impact that this support has had on the staff's improvement planning for the naíscoil.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the naíscoil has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant departments.

8. Conclusion

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this naíscoil is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in learning and teaching and in leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the naíscoil's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

The areas for improvement include the need to:

- review the organisation of the day to meet more effectively the needs of all the children;
- develop the planning, observation and assessment processes in order to best meet the needs of individual children and to ensure progression in learning for all of the children.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION NAÍScoil CHAMLOCHA, CAMLOUGH, NEWRY

1. Details of Children

Total number of children:	am session	pm session
attending the pre-school setting	17	-
in their immediate pre-school year	10	-
funded by Department of Education (DE)	10	-
qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 & 2	-	-
with a statement of special educational needs	-	-
without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	-	-
with English as an additional language	-	-
who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	*	-

* Special Educational Needs = fewer than five

Attendance** of funded children for the previous school year.	100%
Number of days open in previous school year	188

** Calculated from the date when the intake was complete

2. Details of Sessions

Duration of morning session	Duration of afternoon session
3¾ hours	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff, including leader	0	4
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification	0	4
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification	0	1
New appointments within previous 12 months	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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