

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Naíscoil Cholmcille,
Derry City

Report of an inspection in
December 2015

eti

*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 used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on 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 nursery school / playgroup has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the nursery school / playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school /playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the nursery school/ playgroup sustains improvement.
The nursery school/ playgroup needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's/ playgroup's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The nursery school / playgroup needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the nursery school's / playgroup's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

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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 settings, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self -evaluation* at: [Together Towards Improvement Pre-school | Education and Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors observed learning and teaching through play, the children's achievements and standards, scrutinised relevant documentation, and held formal and 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 including the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

All of the parental responses to the confidential questionnaire were highly positive. In their additional written comments, the parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the naíscóil. The staff questionnaires were wholly positive.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all children, the purpose of inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to evaluate the:

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

3. Context

Naíscóil Cholmcille is accommodated in Skeoge Industrial Park in Derry, in a purpose-built unit owned by the Irish-language community group Croí an Phobail. Currently, eight pre-school education programme funded children and five children in their immediate pre-school year, attend the part-time session in the naíscóil.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Achievements and standards	Good
Provision for learning	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are well settled for the time of year and are secure in the routines of the day. All of the children engage in purposeful, concentrated play of both a solitary and collaborative nature. They are developing well their independence, effective social skills and positive attitudes to their learning.
- The children communicate well with each other and with adults during the opportunities for group story sessions and the well-established snack routine. The children enjoy books, access them independently and make good use of the opportunities for early mark-making. They demonstrate a very good understanding of the Irish spoken by the staff and they are also beginning to respond to the staff in Irish.
- The children demonstrate a keen interest in the arts; they take part in sustained role play, participate enthusiastically in singing and music making and work creatively with a range of media to make simple representations. The children would benefit from a more creative approach to aspects of their art work.
- The children are developing well their fine motor skills as they use a range of tools in the playroom during snack, at the dough table and in the home corner. They are developing well their gross motor skills as they engage enthusiastically in physical energetic play outdoors.
- The children have a good understanding of key mathematical concepts, such as number, measures and positional language; they use mathematical language during play, both indoors and outdoors.

6. Provision for learning

- The staff have created an attractive and well-organised learning environment indoors and outdoors. The resources are accessible to the children and good use is made of natural products to develop the children's curiosity and investigative skills. The staff need to ensure that the children develop further their self-management skills in order to make better use of the available resources. The organisation of the day provides a good balance between free play and the more adult-led activities.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is of a consistently good to very good standard; a particular strength of the interactions is the modelling of play by the staff. They use Irish in all of their interactions with the children and have created a linguistically-rich immersion environment for the children. The interactions could be further improved by more open-ended discussions to develop the children's thinking skills.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. There is a welcoming and inclusive ethos in the naíscóil. The staff treat the children with care and respect have a consistent, positive approach to their work. The children's behaviour is very good.
- The play programme is broad and well-balanced and provides good to very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The particular strengths of the provision are the development of the World Around Us curriculum and the development of the children's language skills.

- The planning guides effectively the work of the staff with the children. It is well informed by the thorough system for observing the children at play and assessing the progress in their learning. It will be important that the staff continue to develop the planning to help ensure progression and further challenge across all areas of the curriculum.
- The naíscoil gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity.

7. Leadership and management

- There is a collaborative team approach within the naíscoil and a commitment by staff to provide a linguistically-rich immersion environment for the children. The leader is an effective role model and is supported well by her staff and management committee in all areas of the life and work of the naíscoil.
- There is a developing culture of self-evaluation which has begun to inform effectively the development planning processes within the naíscoil. There is a comprehensive development plan in place which is supported by well-focused action plans and a robust evidence base. It will be essential for the staff to refine further the development plan in order to pace appropriately the planned improvements.
- The naíscoil has developed very good links with the parents through an informative induction meeting and regular newsletters which give good guidance on supporting the children's learning at home.
- 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 Department.

8. Overall effectiveness

The naíscoil demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the naíscoil sustains improvement.

There is an area for improvement which the naíscoil has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area is:

- to develop further the planning process to ensure progression and further challenge across all areas of the curriculum.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON NAÍScoil CHOLMCILLE

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	
Attending part-time	13
Under 3 years of age*	5
Funded by Department of Education	8
With statement of special educational needs	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0
With English as an additional language	0
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	0

* On 1 July.

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

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	8
Average attendance for the previous year.	
Number of days open in previous school year	180

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	9.00 am-12.00 pm	

3. Details of staff

Number of:	Full-time	Part-time
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders		2
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		2
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		
New appointments within the previous 12 months		

Number of: ***	
Students	1
Trainees	

*** Total placements since September of current year

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