

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Naíscoil na Deirge, Castlederg
County Tyrone

Report of an inspection in
February 2016

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 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 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.

Seventy-five percent of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaire; all their responses were highly positive. In their additional written comments, the parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the work of the naíscóil. All of the staff responded to the questionnaire; their responses were also wholly positive.

2. Focus of inspection

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

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

3. Context

Naíscóil na Deirge is an Irish medium pre-school playgroup situated in purpose built mobile accommodation on the Hospital Road in Castlederg, County Tyrone. A new leader has been in post since September 2015.

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 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 circle time and the 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 an interest in the arts making good use of the available resources. 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 are developing well their fine motor skills as they use a range of tools in the playroom, for example, during snack, at the dough table and in the home corner. They engage enthusiastically in physical, energetic play outdoors.
- The children have a good understanding of key mathematical concepts, such as, number and measures; they use mathematical language confidently during play, both indoors and outdoors.

6. Provision for learning

- The staff have created stimulating and child-centred learning environments, in the playroom and outdoors, which reflect well the children's interests. All of the available space for learning is used effectively to encourage the children's independence and self-management skills. Good use is made of natural products to develop the children's curiosity and investigative skills.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is of a consistently good to very good quality; 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 each other and have created a linguistically-rich immersion environment for the children. The interactions could be improved further by more open-ended discussions to develop the children's problem solving and thinking skills.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. There is a welcoming, positive, respectful ethos which impacts on the work of the playgroup. The staff know the children well and respond with care to their needs and interests.
- 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 opportunities for the children's physical development and the development of the children's language skills.

- The planning guides effectively the work of the staff with the children. It is informed by the system for observing the children at play and assessing the progress in their learning. The staff need to develop further the processes of observing, recording and assessing the children's progress in order to ensure progression and further challenge across all areas of the curriculum.
- The naíscoil staff give very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity; the children learn how to make healthy food choices, enjoy healthy snacks and participate in a varied range of energetic physical activities.

7. Leadership and management

- There is a collaborative team approach within the naíscoil and a commitment by staff to provide a high quality 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 well-developed culture of self-evaluation which has led to significant improvements in the naíscoil's provision, for example, in the development of the outdoor play provision. There is a comprehensive three-year development plan in place which identifies appropriate priorities for the ongoing improvements in the work of the naíscoil.
- The staff have developed effective links with the parents through, for example, regular informative newsletters and the interesting information notice board at the entrance to the playroom.
- The early years specialist, from Altram, gives regular, well-focused support to the naíscoil staff and management committee. In particular, they have worked together on improving the processes of self-evaluation and the quality of the learning environment.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the naíscoil has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The following area needs to be addressed:
 - written risk assessments are required for trips outside the naíscoil setting.

8. Overall effectiveness

Naíscoil na Deirge 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, in particular, the need to:

- develop further the observation, assessment and planning processes to ensure progression and further challenge across all areas of the curriculum; and
- complete written risk assessments for all educational visits outside the naíscoil.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON NAÍScoil NA DEIRGE

1. Details of children

Number of children:	Class 1
Attending full-time	
Attending part-time	10
Under 3 years of age*	6
Funded by Department of Education	4
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.	75
Average attendance for the previous year.	87.5%
Number of days open in previous school year	185

2. Duration of sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
	9:30 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		1

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

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