

# PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Naíscoil na Páirce Glaise,  
Armagh

Report of an Inspection in  
February 2016

*eti*

The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

**Providing Inspection Services for:**

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
Department for Communities

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.

## Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Focus of inspection	1
3. Context	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	1
5. Achievements and standards	2
6. Provision for learning	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Overall effectiveness	3
Appendix	

## 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 meeting with those involved with leadership and management including the management group; and
- the opportunity for the parents and staff to complete confidential questionnaires.

A small number of parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the responses were wholly positive. The parents expressed their appreciation of the caring, hardworking and committed staff and the excellent opportunities the children receive to develop skills in a second language. The staff highlighted the highly effective teamwork within the naíscoil and their appreciation of the support they receive from: Altram; their early years specialist in the adjoining statutory naíscoil; and, other staff and management in the adjoining Christian Brothers' Primary School. All of the findings from the questionnaires were shared and discussed with the representatives from the management group and the staff.

## 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

Naíscoil na Páirce Glaise is an Irish-medium voluntary pre-school situated in the grounds of the Christian Brothers' Primary School, Armagh. The current enrolment is 26 children and they all come from the surrounding area. A baseline inspection was carried out in May 2014.

## 4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

## **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children are well settled and almost all display very good levels of independence and self-management. Almost all of the children sustain purposeful, concentrated play and are developing effective social skills and forming friendships as they play collaboratively with their peers.
- Almost all of the children have very good language and communication skills. They have a very good understanding of the Irish spoken to them and are beginning to respond in Irish using single words and short phrases. They show a keen interest in books, both indoors and outdoors, and participate enthusiastically during the large-group story session. The children have made very good progress with their early mark making and writing and they express their ideas well through representational drawings and paintings.
- The children are developing well their understanding of key mathematical concepts and associated language and terminology in Irish, particularly in shape, measures and early number, through a range of play opportunities indoors and outdoors.
- The children's fine motor skills are well developed as they engage in, for example, early writing and construction activities, and as they independently prepare and serve their own snack. In the outdoor environment, the children develop very well both their fine and gross motor skills through a range of stimulating play activities and they engage enthusiastically in a range of energetic, physical activities, such as, running, jumping and balancing.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The staff have created an attractive learning environment in which the children's work is valued and celebrated in displays both within the playroom and in the well-resourced, recently developed outdoor area.
- The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is of a good standard. The staff use Irish in all of their interactions with the children and have created a linguistically-rich immersion environment for the children. A particular strength of the staff interactions is the skilful modelling of play and development of language at the well-planned and authentically resourced role-play area.
- The snack routine and transitions between the activities are developed effectively to provide good learning opportunities across the curriculum. The staff need to develop a less formal approach to aspects of the pre-school day and ensure that the planned programme provides an appropriate balance between free play and the more adult-led activities.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the naíscóil is good. The staff know their children well and there is a positive and inclusive ethos in the naíscóil.
- The pre-school programme is well balanced and provides good to very good opportunities for learning across most areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff need to develop further the provision in the Arts to develop the children's creativity and extend their learning using a range of natural resources.

- The staff have established an effective cycle of observing, recording and assessing the children's development and are beginning to use this information appropriately to inform effectively future planning.
- The naíscoil gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- There is an effective team ethos within the naíscoil and a culture of collegiality at all levels. The leader is supported well by her staff and management committee in all areas of the life and work of the naíscoil. The process of self-evaluation is at an early stage and, although appropriate priorities have been identified, there is a need for a strategic approach to self-evaluation based on a robust system of evidence gathering and consultation.
- There are very effective links and partnerships with: a wide range of external agencies and professionals; the parents and local community; the adjoining statutory naíscoil; and, the senior leadership team and foundation stage staff in the adjoining primary school, which support the children well in their transition from pre-school to primary.
- The early years specialist from the adjoining statutory naíscoil has made a good contribution to the overall development of the provision in this 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. Overall effectiveness**

Naíscoil na Páirce Glaise 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 further development of the Arts provision and the rigour of the self-evaluation process.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON NAÍScoil NA PÁIRCE GLAISE, ARMAGH

### 1. Details of children

<b>Number of children:</b>	Class 1
Attending full-time	26
Attending part-time	
Under 3 years of age*	
Funded by Department of Education	26
With statement of special educational needs	
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	1
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	2
With English as an additional language	1
Who left in previous school year to attend reception provision within a primary school	

\* 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.	3.8
Average attendance for the previous year.	88%
Number of days open in previous school year	195

### 2. Duration of sessions

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
	2.5 hrs	

### 3. Details of staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>
Staff including, Teachers/Leaders		4
Number of staff holding a recognised child care qualification		3
Number of staff holding a recognised teaching qualification		1
New appointments within the previous 12 months		1

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	
Trainees	

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

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