

**Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche**

**Annual Trustees Report**

**31st January 2023**

**Statement of Accounts**

**Year Ended 31st March 2023**

**Charity Number:**

**105910**

## **Annual Report Recorded January 2024**

### **(Covering Accounts for year ended March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023)**

The trustees of Irish language pre-school committee, Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche, are pleased to submit their report and accounts for the period 30th March 2021 to March 31st 2022.

### **Achievements and Performance for the Naíscoil Year 2023**

#### **The Year in Numbers**

25 - Years supporting pre-school development and learning through the medium of Irish in the locality

8 – Management Committee meetings

180 - Members of the public served (including 30 children and their parents/guardians over two academic periods)

2 – Events and trips

£3,7732 – Surplus/ (deficit) of Income over Expenditure (Year ending 31 March 2023)

#### **Meeting Programme**

Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche's Management Committee meets once a month throughout the year with the exception of December, April, July and August.

Members of the Committee meet with Staff on the last Wednesday of each month throughout the academic year.

#### **Reference and Administration Details**

<b>Charity name:</b>	Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche
<b>Charity registration number:</b>	1072893
<b>Address of Charity:</b>	The Mobile Block Castlewellan Community Centre, 32 Circular Road, Castlewellan, Co Down, BT31 9ED
<b>E-Mail Address:</b>	staffnaiscoilbb@gmail.com
<b>Trustees:</b>	Joanne Donnelly (Chairperson) Evelyn Connolly (Treasurer) Felicity O'Connor (Secretary) Emer O'Hagan (Grants Officer)
<b>Staff:</b>	Sinead Doyle (Pre-School Leader) Annmarie O'Neill (Pre-School Deputy Leader) Michelle McAleenan (Part-Time Pre-School Deputy Leader)

**Independent Examiner:**

Maura McGorrian

Early Years Team, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Grove House

Antrim Road

Ballynahinch

BT24 8BA

**Objectives and Activities:**

Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche provides pre-school education for eligible children (i.e. 3-4 years old) living in the Newcastle/Castlewellan area. The Naíscoil delivers the full pre-school curriculum through the medium of Irish. Currently PEAGS funding is not available and children are funded privately only. However, the Naíscoil was supported by Pathway funding throughout 2021-2023 therefore the places were heavily subsidised. The Naíscoil provides five sessions per week. Each session lasts for two hours and forty five minutes.

The Naíscoil provides a good foundation for proceeding into either Irish or English primary-level education.

The aim of the Naíscoil is to enhance through the medium of Irish the development and education of children under statutory school age by encouraging parents/guardians to understand and provide for the needs of their children by -

- Offering appropriate play facilities, with the right of parents/carers to take responsibility for and to become involved in the activities of the Naíscoil, ensuring that the Naíscoil offers opportunities for all children, regardless of religion, culture, race or means.
- Encouraging the study of the needs of such children and their families and promoting public interest in and recognition of such needs of such children and their families in the local areas
- Supporting the values and principles of the DHSS

**Achievements and Performance**

The committee has made a conscious effort to keep spending in line with the budget.

The Naíscoil requested that it be recognised as a PEAGs setting by the Education Authority. Unfortunately, this was not possible as the Naíscoil in Castlewellan is not currently over-subscribed.

Pathways funding enabled the committee to invite the Naíscoil staff to avail of The Curiosity Approach training course and to attend Irish language evening classes.

The Naíscoil was based in Bryansford GAA Sports Hall and Club House since September 2018. In May 2023 the Naíscoil committee was informed by a committee member representing the landlord that it had to move by June 2023. The Naíscoil then relocated to a mobile building on the site of Castlewellan Community Centre. This move was registered with the Early Years Team at the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. The move was very smooth and no

children registered to date were lost as a result. Numbers attending have continued to grow over the subsequent months. The Naíscoil staff and committee agree that the move has been successful.

### **Financial Review:**

The Naíscoil's most recent financial report covers up to the year to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023. This report has been broadly consistent with the trustee's forecasts and expectations; a surplus / (deficit) of income over expenditure of £3,772 was accrued over the year. Please note that the Naíscoil Committee also holds a second account which includes designated and restricted funds only. These are funds which the committee has designated to be used to develop an Irish language family centre and the restricted funds, if needs be, are to be used in the event of staff redundancies.

Expenditure for the Charity is closely monitored. The Trustees consider the year-end financial position to be satisfactory and confirm that the Charity can meet all known obligations.

#### **Income (Year End: 31 March 2023)**

£47,718

#### **Expenses (Year End: 31 March 2023)**

£50, 123

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

**Governing document:** Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche was established in September 1998. Its constitution was registered with the Charity Commission on 17th July 2017. The constitution was revised in September 2018 when the Naíscoil changed names and moved premises to Newcastle as the 4 year olds in the naíscoil now came under the statutory care of the NI Department of Education when Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche (Castlewellan site) received Statutory recognition.

**Appointment and Recruitment of Trustees:** Trustees are appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

**Trustees' Induction and Training:** Trustees are encouraged to read Charity Commission and other newsletters and to attend courses designed to keep them abreast of their duties and responsibilities. Committee members attend at least two governance-related courses provided by Pathways The Organisation for Early Years annually.

**Organisational Structure:** The Trustees administer the Charity and meet regularly throughout the year, during these meetings all charitable matters are discussed including the raising of funds, income structure, ongoing performance and to approve forthcoming charitable expenditure.

The Charity monitors performance against budgeted targets and reports annually at the Annual General Meeting, where Trustees' resignation and appointments are made in line with the necessary roles and requirements of the foreseeable future.

**Risk Management:** Management has reviewed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed. Where appropriate systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the Charity faces. Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche benefits from a diligent and dedicated team of Trustees. Costs are closely monitored to ensure the Charity operates within its means. The Charity maintains a separate bank account to cover its reserves, all of which minimise its exposure to risk.

The Charity's internal policies in place to mitigate risk are available in the code in the Naíscoil lobby and are summarised below:

Absence of Manager

Accidents – prevention, reporting, recording and notification additional needs

Allegations against staff CCTV

Complaints confidentiality consent

Data protection equality

First aid

Infection protection and control

Intimate/personal care

Maintenance and replacement of play equipment

Management aggression and challenging behaviour – including bullying

Managing emergencies

Management of medicines

Management of records

Management of risks associated with the Care of Individual Service Users

Menu planning

Mobile phones

Parents access to records

Participation

Photography and videography

Play

Provision of food and drink

Reporting adverse and untoward incidents

Safeguarding and child protection

Security of the settings

Smoking

Social networking

Staffing

- behaviour and conduct
- clothing/uniform
- discipline
- grievance
- induction
- meetings
- records
- recruitment
- rotas
- Supervision and appraisal
- Training and development

Transport for service users – provision and use of whistle blowing

## **Related Party Transactions**

There were no related party transactions during this or the prior period.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Charity's reserves policy is to maintain reserves at a level adequate to protect its ongoing work from significant fluctuations in service income. This policy is reviewed annually.

## **Restricted Funds**

At a meeting of the management committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018 members of the committee considered the groups restricted funds and they agreed how these should be managed

It was agreed that:

- £4,000 would be restricted in the event that it would be used to pay the two current members of staff redundancy pay.

## **Designated Funds**

At a meeting of the management committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018 members of the committee considered the groups designated funds and they agreed how these should be managed.

It was agreed that the group's designated funds would be used to start a creche / family centre / Irish language hub.

- The designated sum which currently stands at £30,000 would be retained by the Naíscoil and used towards the group's aim of creating an Irish language Hub / creche as per its constitution which was updated to show that:

**Section 9:** The constitution was updated to agree that the Naíscoil would retain its current status with the Charity Commission and retain the finances, rather than handing them over to the Bunscoil as per its original constitution.

The reserves of the Charity are therefore adequate and the Trustees consider that the Charity will continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future. There are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue.

## **Public Benefit Statement**

The trustees of Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche confirm that they have had regard to the NI Charity Commission's Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

The public benefit requirement has informed the activities of the Naíscoil in the year to January 31st 2024.

In evaluating public benefit the trustees note that membership of the society is open to all who share an interest in pre-school learning and development through the Irish language. Whilst we would encourage those with interest to join our ranks we also strive to make our services and facilities available to those with no back ground in Irish.

The direct benefits which flow from our object or purpose includes increasing the opportunity for pre-school children in the Newcastle/Castlewellan area to avail of an Irish language pre-school.

These benefits are demonstrated by the growing session sizes that Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche experiences year on year and the trend for the class sizes to grow throughout the year. Additionally, the benefits are demonstrated through feedback received in Inspection Reports and from parents.

The purposes of our charity will not lead to any harm. Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche's beneficiaries includes the general population living within south east Down including Newcastle, Castlewellan, Dundrum, Clough, Hilltown, Rathriland, Ballyward and the surrounding areas. A private benefit to trustees may arise from our programme of ongoing training programmes. Through this training trustees may gain skills and experience

which are transferable to other settings. These benefits are incidental and necessary to ensure the benefit is provided to our beneficiaries.

The Trustees' annual report was approved on January 31st 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of Trustees by:

Joanne Donnelly (Chair) Trustee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donnelly', with a stylized flourish at the end.