

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Setting Name	Liscarroll Community Pre-school
Setting Address	Liscarroll National School Liscarroll County Cork
DCYA number	09CC0146

Date of Inspection: 09-12-2019



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills**

WHAT IS AN EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION?

The Early Years Education Inspection (EYEI) model is used to provide evaluative information, advice and support in relation to education provision in a pre-school setting participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. These inspections affirm good practice and advise actions, where appropriate, to aid the further development of education provision in the setting.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector(s) evaluated and reported under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

1. Quality of the context to support children's learning and development
2. Quality of processes to support children's learning and development
3. Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements
4. Quality of management and leadership for learning

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the setting's provision in each area.

Early-Years Education Inspection

Date of inspection	09-12-2019
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of interactions during one session• Interaction with children• Review of relevant documents• Feedback to setting practitioners

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Liscarroll Community Pre-school was established in 1980. The setting provides a sessional pre-school service to the local community. On the day of this inspection, seven children enrolled in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme were supported by two early-years practitioners and one community employment practitioner. The early years setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised of the report; a response was not received from the setting.

AREA 1

QUALITY OF CONTEXT TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The quality of the context to support the children's learning and development is very good.
- Great efforts are made to create a very warm and friendly atmosphere for children and their families. The interactions on arrival are welcoming; these ease the transition from home to the setting.
- The daily routine is well established and responsive to the children's individual and group needs. Elements of the routine include extended periods of free play, active outdoor play and large group circle time.
- Transitions from one activity to another are handled very well by the practitioners. A particular song is played to prompt the children to react and assist in the clean-up of the environment.
- Snack-time is a social occasion, where practitioners and children gather together and engage in relaxed conversations. The practitioners could utilise this time to further encourage the children's independence and self-help skills through the creation of roles and some responsibilities.
- Practitioners provide the children with clear and consistent guidance on positive behaviour. The strategies used by the practitioner to support the children to understand each other's actions and intentions are highly commendable.
- Practitioners nurture the children's sense of identity as individuals and as members of the pre-school group through conscious inclusion of activities that motivate them and through photographic displays of previous learning experiences. Children would benefit from opportunities to extend their knowledge of the local community and people within it.

Actions advised

- Practitioners are advised to develop snack time to generate opportunities to promote the children's self-help and self-care needs. For example, practitioners could involve children in the preparation of the environment and in the clean-up routine.
- The practitioners are advised to extend the children's knowledge of the local community and the people within it. This could be achieved by using maps or photographic displays to show local areas of interest such as the local shops, schools, geographical features and buildings.

AREA 2

QUALITY OF PROCESSES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The quality of the processes to support the children's learning and development is very good.
- A play-based curriculum has been documented that is reflective of *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. Planning for children's learning is mainly thematic with little inclusion of children's emerging interests, strengths or needs.
- Effective assessment practices have been established. Individual observations capture each child's learning experiences and achievements. These are stored in each child's scrapbook and are readily accessible to the children.
- The indoor learning environment is well maintained and divided into discrete interest areas. The children are offered an array of opportunities to develop their physical, imaginative and fine motor skills in the numerous outdoor play environments. The indoor space is in need of development as the range of learning experiences currently offered to the children is limited.
- Practitioners understand their role in supporting, facilitating and extending children's play. They skilfully take on their roles as play-partners and in doing so, they effectively support children's learning and development.
- The practitioners genuinely acknowledge the efforts which the children make, with specific reference to actions and behaviours demonstrated by children as they persevere to achieve success.
- The practitioners use many effective strategies to support the development of the children's early numeracy skills. For example, during the inspection, two children were supported to guess how many blocks it would take to create an arch and then they were supported to count the blocks upon completion, testing their hypothesis.

Actions advised

- Practitioners are advised to use the information gathered from their individual observations of children's learning to inform the short-term curriculum plan. This would support the delivery of an emergent and enquiry-based curriculum.
- The practitioners are advised to review the indoor environment and to develop and broaden the range of learning experiences offered to the children. In this regard, the 'Learning Environment' pillar of the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* provides practical tips.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is very good.
- Children effectively use both non-verbal and verbal communication to express their experiences, thoughts, ideas and feelings. Natural, free-flowing conversations were particularly evident during times where children were actively engaged in activities or experiences and with the rich selection of books.
- On the day of the inspection, during the free-play period, the children were very animated, engaged and expressed excitement at being allowed to use the limited open-ended play resources.
- The children are developing an emerging sense of self and others. They discuss their likes and share their achievements and interests with others. Opportunities for the children to become involved in documenting their own learning are not currently provided.
- The children have opportunities to express themselves creatively through their engagement with the very well-resourced writing area and painting table. They have access to free mark-making, cutting, gluing and painting, and playdough.
- The children display well-developed social skills: they play alone, in small groups and create games with one another in large groups. Children demonstrate positive attitudes towards solving problems encountered in play and rarely need to seek out the support of an adult in times of conflict.

- The children consistently explore and experiment in the outdoor learning environments. During the inspection, the children were observed using their fine and gross motor skills to manipulate objects and materials. Some of the activities they engaged in included visiting the church crib, playing hide and seek, discussing the characteristics of horses seen passing by and running amongst fallen leaves.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to increase the range of natural, real and open-ended materials in the indoor environment to enrich the children's engagement in imaginative and role play.
- The practitioners are advised to provide opportunities for the children to reflect on their learning, and as a group it would be beneficial for them to be involved in the development of a group learning journal throughout the year. This will support the children to make links between their current, previous and future learning.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
- The lead practitioner is highly commended for her role in managing and leading the work of the setting. The role of the board of management could be further developed into a more proactive and purposeful role.
- There is a strong sense of collaboration and the practitioners articulate their dedication to delivering high-quality provision for the children in their care. Practitioners would benefit from opportunities to engage in regular one-to-one meetings where they would receive feedback on their professional performance and their ongoing development from the board of management.
- The practitioners have demonstrated great initiative and commitment in accessing support and training from external agencies such as their local County Childcare Committee. For example they completed Equality and Diversity training and the engaged in the Healthy Ireland Programme.
- A clear vision for the setting has been articulated and shared by the practitioners and the families. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and are displayed in the hallway and pre-school room.
- The practitioners have informal monthly staff meetings to review their plans. The tools in the *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide* have not yet been used as part of the review process.
- Practitioners read stories with children to support them in their transition to the local school, and the children meet school-age children in the school yard. There is a conscious awareness of the importance of this transition with formal procedures in place to support children during this time.

Actions advised

- The board of management is advised to engage more frequently and proactively in supporting the setting. There is a need for example, to introduce formal professional performance reviews for practitioners and to review policies and procedures that support the continued professional development of the practitioner and the setting as a whole.
- Practitioners are advised to regularly use the materials in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* to establish a more formal approach and structure for their review processes and to support them when giving information to parents about *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*.

Summary of Overall Inspection

Area	Quality Level
Quality of context to support children's learning and development	Very good
Quality of processes to support children's learning and development	Very good
Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements	Very good
Quality of management and leadership for learning	Very good

Language used in Early-Years Education Inspection reports

Excellent	Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of children.
Very good	Provision that is very good is highly effective in meeting the needs of children.
Good	Provision that is good is effective in meeting the needs of children but with some aspects to be developed.
Fair	Provision that is fair requires practice to be improved to meet the needs of children.
Poor	Provision that is poor is inadequate and requires significant improvement to meet the needs of children.