EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Mayfield Community Pre-School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>295 Old Youghal Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Bungalow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roseville House FRCLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cork City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>09CY0006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date of Inspection: 15-10-2018
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of inspection</th>
<th>15-10-2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inspection activities undertaken</strong></td>
<td><strong>Observation of interactions during a number of sessions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meeting with setting manager</td>
<td>• Interaction with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meeting with practitioners</td>
<td>• Review of relevant documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meeting with board of directors (including parent representatives on the board)</td>
<td>• Feedback to setting manager and practitioners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONTEXT OF SETTING**

The Mayfield Community Pre-School is an urban community setting in the heart of Mayfield. Two practitioners and one person on a community employment scheme provide early years education for a maximum of sixteen children during the morning session. On the day of the inspection, thirteen children were present. Five of these are under the age of three at present. All staff members and the chairperson of the management committee attended the post-inspection feedback meeting. The early years setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised of the report, and the response of the setting will be found in the appendix of this report.

**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.
- Practitioners show sensitivity, warmth and a positive regard for the children and their families. They have established a caring ethos and a welcoming affirming atmosphere.
- The daily routine is displayed on the wall and also in the parental handbook. The structure of the daily routine requires that children make too many transitions. Practitioner-initiated/led times which require the children to concentrate on tasks, outweigh child-initiated/led play times.
- Snack time is utilised as a social occasion, where the children all sit and eat together. Food and drink are currently served to the children by the practitioners.
- Times of transitions, such as tidy-up time after free play are used very well as learning and development opportunities.
- A well-organised key worker system is in place and the system is explained in the parental handbook.
- Relationships are responsive, respectful and reciprocal. Practitioners provide good guidance and encouragement toward positive behaviour.
- The children’s sense of identity and belonging is nurtured very well. Meaningful opportunities are provided for the children to develop an appreciation of themselves as individuals and as members of groups. These include a birthday chart, several photo displays of children involved in different activities, photos above their coat hooks and a family wall.
- It is evident in the displays and planning sheets, that the setting actively involves family and community members in sharing their expertise and interests with the children. A lovely ‘our community’ collage is on display and the children occasionally visit the local library.

**Actions advised**

- In line with the age of the children, a better balance needs to be generated between physically inactive times where the children are required to concentrate on tasks, and active free play periods. Practitioners are advised to allow for long uninterrupted free play periods indoors and outdoors, interspersed by short adult-initiated/led activities, such as circle and story time. Most activities, such as the breakfast club, arts and crafts, books or experiments could be offered parallel to free play as choice activities. The newly devised daily routine needs to be displayed in photo sequence at child height for the children to follow.
- Practitioners are advised to give more agency and autonomy to the children to arrange their snack, thereby utilising snack time as a learning and development opportunity. The children would benefit from choosing their food and pouring their own drink, as well as laying the table and tidying it up after the meal, and sweeping the floor.
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 good.
- Broad-based curriculum plans are implemented. These are on display for the parents. There is no evidence that children’s emergent interests are utilised for curriculum planning.
- Various assessment approaches are used to gather information about children’s learning and development. These include learning stories; a group learning journal with photos, not linked to learning outcomes; children’s art collection, and individual practitioners’ note books, where anecdotal information is captured. The outcomes of assessment are not visibly linked to planning.
- The practitioners engage and motivate the children in their learning and development in a respectful and caring way. They use some good interaction strategies, such as scaffolding to further children’s learning.
- The indoor environment is richly resourced and well-structured with clear, designated play areas. All the play areas and material boxes are labelled. The outdoor environment offers some good play options, such as a little mud-kitchen, a climbing frame, a see-saw and a slide.
- To some extent, play is recognised and utilised as a medium through which the children learn and develop. The children have opportunities to engage in play activities alone, with peers and/or with practitioners.
- The children’s emergent language, literacy and numeracy skills are fostered very effectively. Mathematical language and concepts are used during everyday life situations, such as when building the castle. Songs, rhymes, games and books are used meaningfully. A variety of mark-making options is freely available to the children. Given the richness and benefits of all these experiences, the use of didactic teaching methods needs to be discontinued.

Actions advised
- Practitioners are advised to work with the ‘Assessment and Planning’ pillar of the on-line Aistear, Siolta Practice Guide, to gain knowledge and understanding about the development and implementation of an emergent curriculum. Practitioners are further advised to strengthen the links between assessment outcomes and planning, for example by utilising the photographs of the children engaged in activities to highlight learning and development outcomes.
- Practitioners are advised to engage with the ‘Interaction’ pillar of the Aistear, Siolta Practice Guide to gather more knowledge about using a range of age appropriate interaction strategies and methodologies. These include active listening, asking open-ended questions, prompting, and following the children’s lead to co-construct knowledge with them.
- The play value of the outdoor environment needs to be further enhanced to provide a broader variety of play options. Sense-rich, open-ended, versatile, manipulative materials, such as sand, water, buckets, shovels, paint brushes, conkers, sea-shells, pine-cones, pipes and funnels could be added.
- Steps need to be taken to ensure that child-initiated/led, exploratory, active and interactive free play is recognised and utilised as the main medium through which the children learn and develop.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is good.
- The children demonstrate joy during their activities. They are engaged, interested and motivated, showing positive learning dispositions such as curiosity, initiative, persistence and self-confidence.
- The children understand the rules and boundaries of acceptable behaviour and are beginning to develop their capacity for self-regulation and conflict resolution. Their personal and social skills, such as problem-solving, negotiating, co-operating, turn-taking and building relationships are beginning to evolve.
- The children are proficient communicators, using a range of communication strategies. Language is used well to give and receive information, make requests, ask questions and clarify thinking and feelings.
• Through the very natural use of Irish words and phrases for everyday life situations, the children are gaining an understanding of how different languages can be used in different situations and with different people.

• There is some evidence of planting in the outdoor area. Experiments are used to expand the children’s understanding and make sense of the world around them.

**Actions advised**

• Practitioners are advised to focus on the creation of child-directed play situations, where the children have to use their personal and social skills to organise their play.

• The outdoor area, in particular, needs to provide more opportunities for the children to refine their physical body and use their developing skills to manipulate objects and diverse materials to make sense of the world around them.

### AREA 4

**QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING**

• The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.

• Staff regularly reflect, review and plan practice. One hour non-contact time is utilised on a daily basis for this work. A personal diary is used to gather information about children’s development. A short weekly team meeting provides time to share information and reflect and plan together. Outcomes of meetings are documented.

• An ethos of teamwork, collaboration and partnership is evident.

• The setting is part of the local childcare network and utilises the outcomes of these meetings to improve practice.

• There is clarity about the roles and responsibilities of each practitioner and everybody gets an opportunity to take leadership in promoting good quality learning.

• All practitioners avail of continuous professional development opportunities.

• A variety of two-way communication channels is utilised, to share information between the setting and the families.

• Transitions into and from the setting are managed effectively and sensitively.

**Action advised**

• Working with all areas of the *Aistear, Siolta Practice Guide* is advised to ensure that practice is consistently informed by relevant, contemporary research and evidence-based theory.

### CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The capacity of the setting to continue to implement the actions advised above is very good.
### Summary of Overall Inspection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quality Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of context to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of processes to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of children’s learning experiences and achievements</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Language used in Early-Years Education-focused Inspection reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very good</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is very good is highly effective in meeting the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is good is effective in meeting the needs of children but with some aspects to be developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fair</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is fair requires practice to be improved to meet the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is poor is inadequate and requires significant improvement to meet the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Published June 2019*
APPENDIX

SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

Area 1

In line with the age of the children in our pre-school we will offer less transition times and children will be given choices of e.g. circle time, arts and crafts and other activities will be accessible to the children throughout the session.

Our daily routine will be displayed using pictures and at the child’s eye level. Times will not be included. Snack time is now being used as a learning and development opportunity by the children preparing the table, organizing their snacks and tidying up when finished. This process is ongoing.

Area 2

We are reviewing the seven pillars of Aistear to gain a better understanding about the development and implementation of an emergent curriculum. We are utilizing the photos of our children engaged in activities such as our recently held Grandparents Day to highlight learning and development outcomes.

We will enhance the outdoor play area by providing a sand pit and adding a water tray. We will ask parents for any old pots and pans to further enhance a variety of play options. Planting is ongoing. Shells, acorns, buckets and shovels, watering cans which are available in the pre-school, will be brought outdoors. “Sand and water play provides important opportunities for children to practice cooperative play and sharing and promotes physical development and social skills.”