**EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION REPORT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Kingswood Pre-school</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>33 Sylvan Close</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kingswood</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dublin 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>09DS0133</td>
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**Date of Inspection:** 19-09-2019
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 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>19-09-2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspection activities undertaken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meeting with setting owner</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Observation of interactions during a number of sessions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Interaction with children</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Review of relevant documents</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Informal feedback to practitioners</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Feedback to setting owner</td>
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CONTEXT OF SETTING

Kingswood Pre-school is a privately-owned setting. It was established in 1996 and is based in a residential area in Tallaght, Dublin 24. The setting provides full-time, part-time and after-school care and two morning pre-school sessions for children from the local and surrounding areas, some of whom are enrolled in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. On the day of the inspection, twenty-three children, four practitioners, one of whom is the owner, and an early years student were present. 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 good.
- A caring and warm atmosphere is evident. The practitioners have good knowledge of each child and have developed positive relationships with the children’s families. There is a history of family members attending the setting.
- A key-worker approach is in place. Each key worker has responsible for observing and documenting the learning of a group of children and for sharing this information during daily conversations with parents.
- The daily routine includes opportunities for the children to engage in free play, work time, circle time, an adult-directed, large group activity and outdoor activities. On the day of inspection the routine was not displayed for the children and an insufficient period of time was dedicated to free play.
- The practitioners signal transitions between activities through the use of a verbal, five-minute countdown and a timer. While effective, these strategies were not consistently used throughout the morning.
- Snack time is a pleasant occasion. The children choose where to sit and openly chat with their peers. The practitioners move around the room chatting to children and assisting them with lunch boxes.
- The children exhibit age-appropriate, personal care skills. They independently use the toilet and wash their hands.
- The practitioners make good efforts to nurture the children’s sense of identity and belonging. They represent the uniqueness of each child through photographs, samples of the children’s handprints and art work displays.
- Parents are invited to yearly events, such as the end-of-year graduation and Christmas carol singing. Currently, links have not been established with the local community.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to review the current routine, to increase the length of free-play time and to offer adult-led activities as a free choice during this time. In addition, to further support the children’s predictability of the daily events, the creation of a visual display of the daily routine and the consistent use of verbal alerts and visual cues to signal the impending end of activities are advised.
The practitioners are advised to use meal times as an opportunity to further develop the children’s social, language and self-help skills. In doing so, they are advised to sit with the children and create opportunities to engage in social conversations with them.

To develop children’s awareness of their locality, the practitioners are advised to establish connections between the pre-school and the local community. This could include extending invites to parents and professionals to share their expertise and experiences with the children.

**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.
- A play-based curriculum, with some links to the *Aistear; the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*, is implemented in the setting.
- Monthly planning for the children’s learning is based on themes and projects, general learning goals and seasonal activities. The thematic approach to planning is organised on a medium-term basis.
- Observation learning records, anecdotal notes, photographs and samples of the children’s art work are used to track the children’s learning. Group learning journals are used to document daily activities. The information recorded on the observation records includes broad-based references to aspects of children’s learning, such as ‘imaginary play’, to inform the next steps for the children’s progression.
- During the inspection, most of the practitioners sat and engaged in sustained shared learning interactions with the children.
- Play is central to the children’s learning and the children are recognised as active learners. Some practitioners use open-ended-questioning to extend and support the children’s learning.
- The learning environment consists of two pre-school rooms and an outdoor area. The children have regular access to the outdoor area and engage in gross motor activities, such as climbing and cycling. In the indoor areas they engage in table-top and construction activities, and some pretend play and socio-dramatic play.
- Resources provided for children are age appropriate. During the inspection, many of the resources were toy based and plastic and not all were easily accessible. Opportunities for the children to explore some areas of the outdoor environment were restricted, as the sand area for example was closed off.
- The practitioners foster the children’s early language, literacy and numeracy skills through the use of songs, rhymes and stories.
- The practitioners promote an inclusive environment and link closely with parents and external agencies to support children with additional needs. The practitioners have availed of support under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) to assist children with additional needs.

**Actions advised**

- Practitioners are advised to develop an approach to short-term planning that is closely linked to the children’s interests, needs and dispositions and to review their approach to recording the next steps in children’s learning. In so doing, practitioners are advised to consult the ‘Planning and Assessment’ pillar of the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide*.
- Within the learning environment, the practitioners are advised to develop areas of interest, such as sensory, creative, house, construction, table-top and quiet areas. As part of this process, the provision of freely accessible and more open-ended, household and natural materials and resources is advised. The use of the environment audit tool from the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* will support the implementation of this action.
- To build on their positive interactions with the children, the practitioners are advised to consistently engage with children during activities and to act as play partners during pretend-play activities.
AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is good.
- The children appeared happy and comfortable in their surroundings, and children new to the setting have settled well into the daily routine.
- Many children demonstrate good levels of concentration and persistence as they actively take part in self-chosen and adult-selected activities.
- The children display age-appropriate self-regulation, communication and social skills. They are chatty, can express their ideas and views and many can ask and answer questions in context. On occasion, the waiting period between the practitioners asking a question and the time given to the children to respond was quite short.
- The children’s sense of identity and their awareness of others and the community are emerging. This was demonstrated as they introduced themselves to others, referred to their pets and made reference to local chefs, fire personnel and hairdressers.
- During the inspection, while there were some instances of very imaginative and collaborative play between the children. Opportunities for the children to extend and explore these ideas were restricted due to limited resources and props and the practitioners’ limited use of open-ended questions.
- During circle time, a small number of children reflected on their previous learning experiences. On many occasions the children shared their current learning experiences with others. Opportunities for the children to plan for and to reflect on learning experiences as a small group were not provided during the inspection.
- The children display good co-ordination and fine motor skills. Indoors, they engaged in table-top activities, such as construction straws, treading and jigsaws, and they used the slide, see-saw and rode on the bikes as they played outside.
- Many of the children display a great interest in songs and rhymes and keenly engaged in the adult-led story time. Opportunities for the children to freely engage with books are limited.

Actions advised
- The practitioners are advised to provide additional opportunities for the children to develop their role-play interests and imaginations. In so doing, the greater use of open-ended questions and the provision of additional resources linked to the interest themes will help foster the children’s higher-order thinking and participation levels during activities.
- To support the children to make connections between their new and previous learning, practitioners are advised to provide regular opportunities for the children to plan for, discuss and to reflect on their learning experiences and achievements in small groups.
- Practitioners are advised to review the quality, quantity and accessibility of books and mark-making resources in the learning environments.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is fair.
- The respectful communication and collaboration between the owner and the practitioners contributes to the positive atmosphere in the setting. The owner works alongside the practitioners, most of whom have worked in the setting for many years. During the inspection, each practitioner had opportunities to lead the children’s learning throughout the sessions.
- Daily chats are used by the practitioners and the owner to share information and to discuss day-to-day operational issues and concerns. At the time of the inspection, there were no formal meetings of practitioners or planning opportunities.
- The setting has established links with the local childcare committee and Early Childhood Ireland. The owner recently completed training in the Leadership for Inclusion (LINC) programme. The owner reported that following participation in the LINC training, she has begun to reflect on practice and is currently reviewing setting’s policies and procedures. To date, the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide has not been used as part of this review.
An open-door policy is in operation and positive channels of communication have been created with parents. These include the informal sharing of information and the distribution of a parents’ handbook, letters and notices. The parents’ handbook does not provide a clear vision for the current work of the setting in terms of its mission statement, ethos and curriculum.

To support the children to settle into the setting with ease, children and their parents are invited to attend for two short visits before they are formally enrolled. During this time, parents are welcomed to stay with their child and are also encouraged to leave their child for a short period of time.

The practitioners facilitate circle time discussions and walks to the local school to support the children as they transition to primary school. The owner and practitioners have a long-standing relationship with the local school. The owner meets the principal of the school each year and, with parents’ verbal consent, shares relevant information on the children’s development.

**Actions advised**

- The owner is advised to introduce regular team meetings and individual supervision meetings. These will provide opportunities for practitioners to engage in ongoing review and development of provision and practices and will support them in their roles. The use of the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* will support self-reviews and reflections on practice.
- The owner is advised to update the parents’ handbook to include the setting’s mission statement, ethos and curriculum.
- To enhance the sharing of information with parents, practitioners are advised to hold formal parent-practitioner meetings over the course of the year so as to discuss individual children’s learning and development with parents.
- To support the children’s transitions between rooms in the setting and to primary school and to strengthen the sharing of information with the local school, practitioners are advised to develop a transitions policy. In doing so, the owner and practitioners are advised to refer to the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* pillar on ‘Transition’ and the National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA) *Mo Scéal* resources.

**CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE**

The capacity of the setting to implement the actions advised above is 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>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>Fair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

- The Inspection was a positive experience and we welcomed the advice and recommendations which the report details.

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
- We have implemented a longer free play of 1 hour and 20 minutes to encourage more free choice activities.
- Visual displays are part of our daily routine and frequent verbal alerts are used to prepare for the ending of activities.
- We now engage during snack time, we sit and eat with the children and engaging on conversations.

Area 2
- At present we are practicing short-term planning emerging from a child’s interests and learning is guided by the Aistear and Siolta Practice Guide.
- We have introduced natural and household materials on a creative table and in the quiet corner.

Area 3
- Open-ended questions are frequently used to develop a child’s thinking and exploring.
- We have introduced small group work rather than the large group as we have been doing.

Area 4
- Frequent team and individual meetings are implemented; at present a parent’s handbook is in a process of being updated, which will now include our mission statement, ethics and curriculum statement.
- As regard to children’s learning, formal meetings with parents will take place and the use of ring binder folder will be used to display learning and work.
- We have developed a transition policy to support transition between rooms.