EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>ChildVision Pre-School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>Grace Park Road</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drumcondra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dublin 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>09DY0157</td>
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Date of Inspection: 16-05-2019
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 inspectors 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>16-05-2019</th>
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| **Inspection activities undertaken** | **Observation of interactions during a number of sessions**  
• Meeting with education co-ordinator and setting manager  
• Meeting with practitioners  
• Interaction with children  
• Review of relevant documents  
• Feedback to education co-ordinator, setting manager and practitioners |

**CONTEXT OF SETTING**

ChildVision Pre-School is part of ChildVision, National Education Centre for Blind Children. It is a specialised pre-school dedicated to the education and therapy needs of blind and multi-disabled children. The team at ChildVision includes practitioners, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, nurses, braille specialists, social care workers and pet and equine therapists. The pre-school provides two morning sessions for children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme. In general, the children attend ChildVision for two or three mornings a week. On other days, they may attend another mainstream or specialised pre-school setting. On the morning of the inspection, eight children and four practitioners 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 excellent.
• The manager and practitioners have created a very warm, friendly and nurturing atmosphere. Some of the children travel to the setting on the specialised bus service organised by the setting and other children arrive with family members. On arrival, the practitioners enthusiastically welcome each child and his/her family members and escorts.
• The practitioners know the children very well and the relationships between the practitioners and the children are noteworthy. The practitioners’ interactions with the children are respectful and responsive; they consistently use gentle and warm tones in their communications with the children throughout the sessions. These highly commendable practices are further supported by the setting’s implementation of a key person approach. This approach in one in which each practitioner develops a close secure relationship with a small group of children and acts as the primary link between the pre-school and the parents of the children.
• The daily routine in both rooms is well established, yet sufficiently flexible to be responsive to children’s individual needs. The children demonstrate familiarity with the routine and follow the sequence of activities with ease and enthusiasm. The practitioners provide advance warnings to children of upcoming changes and, prior to transitions, they respectfully check that the children are ready to move on to the next activity.
• The practitioners support children to make decisions in their learning. The children are provided with appropriate choices in accordance with their individualised learning programmes. During the inspection, children were observed to independently make choices, such as selecting the Montessori materials they wished to use and deciding how they wished to engage with the sand.
• Snack time is effectively used to support children’s independence and their self-care and social skills. Children assist in setting the table and in distributing food to their peers. The practitioners sit with the children during snack time and assist them with feeding as needed. They also promote communication and discussion between children.
• The respect and recognition for each child’s uniqueness are commendable. Practice is child centred and structured to the specific needs of each child. This includes the use of mobility aids to support children in different positions and to move and play in accordance with their individual needs and abilities.
• The practitioners organise special occasions throughout the pre-school year that bring the children, their parents, extended family members and the practitioners together. These include the annual Christmas show and the special family fun days.
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.
- The setting’s broad-based curriculum is informed by Aistear; the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework and curriculum programmes that guide provision for children with special educational needs. Provision is also informed by elements of the Montessori Method of early education.
- Planning for children’s learning is thematic and includes consideration of the children’s individual needs. An individualised education plan (IEP) is developed for each child in consultation with his/her parents, the practitioners and members of the multi-disciplinary team.
- The practitioners use a variety of strategies to record the children’s learning. These include daily records of children’s participation in activities, development checklists linked to the curriculum and observations. A home/setting communication journal includes reference to children’s engagements in activities and some learning achievements and this journal is sent home each day. The children's art work is compiled in individual learning books and shared with parents at the end of the pre-school year. There is potential to optimise the effectiveness of the planning and assessment approaches and their impact on children’s progression in learning.
- The practitioners demonstrate highly effective interaction skills as they engage with the children. The practitioners view the children as competent learners and they promote appropriately challenging learning experiences. They accommodate children’s varied communication skills through the use of appropriate tones, questions, familiar words and actions in their conversations with the children.
- Children are learning in an inclusive learning environment. The practitioners differentiate activities in accordance with children’s differing needs, learning styles and interests, and they encourage children’s awareness of their peers. They consistently liaise with a multi-disciplinary team and parents to support children’s participation in the ECCE programme.
- The learning environments are spacious, purposefully organised and well resourced. They include specific interest areas, such as a relaxation/soft mat area and circle-time area. Children also regularly access a specialised sensory room, an outdoor area that provides opportunities for gross motor activities and socio-dramatic play, and a sensory garden.

Action advised
- The practitioners are advised to ensure that there are closer links between children’s individual needs and planning and assessment approaches. To this end, the identification of more specific incremental goals, that identify children’s individual learning needs, interests, dispositions, skills, knowledge and understanding, is advised. This will enhance the planning and tracking of children’s progress and the sharing of information with parents.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is excellent.
- The children demonstrate interest, enjoyment and fun in their learning. They are familiar with the daily routine and the sequence of activities. This was evident in their positive engagement in activities and their comments, sounds and gestures.
- The children are provided with opportunities to experience success throughout the sessions. An example of this was a child’s sense of achievement as she used an adaptive switch; she smiled when she pressed the switch and activated a fan. Children also displayed a sense of achievement as they counted and discussed colours and shapes during the circle-time activity.
- The practitioners effectively facilitate multi-sensory experiences for children. The children participate in sensory and creative activities that encourage the use of their auditory, tactile, olfactory and kinaesthetic senses. They actively engage in multi-sensory activities, including the exploration of sand, music and sensorial games. The circle-time routine each morning includes opportunities for children to experience the smell, texture and song of the day.
- The children are provided with the necessary resources, including assistive technology, to support the development of their language and communication skills. Children verbalise and indicate their needs and wishes through a combination of words and gestures. Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is used to support the acquisition of communication skills for some children who are non-verbal. Individual children also receive support from a speech and language therapist during the ECCE sessions.
• The children are provided with excellent opportunities to explore sound, rhythm and repetition in language. During the inspection, children were observed participating in rhyming activities, singing and enjoying music. They eagerly engaged in a well-presented storytelling activity, where they had opportunities to explore props that stimulated their senses.

• Children demonstrate emerging social skills and an awareness of others. Examples included children holding hands as they participated in the singing of the welcome song, and the empathy one child showed, when she thought she had stood on a practitioner’s toe. She asked the practitioner ‘Did I hurt your toe?’

• The children are provided with a range of opportunities to participate in activities that stimulate their gross motor and fine motor skills. This includes their use of manipulative materials and equipment in the outdoor area.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

• The quality of management and leadership for learning is excellent.

• There is a very professional, committed team in ChildVision. Management and practitioners regularly research and review resources and approaches pertinent to children with visual and complex needs. Currently, a review of the setting’s curriculum is being conducted to assess its effectiveness in guiding provision. High levels of teamwork and collaboration are evident between management and practitioners and members of the multi-disciplinary team.

• There is a well-structured, co-ordinated approach to planning, review and evaluation. This includes frequent management meetings, team meetings and opportunities for individual and group reflection. The outcomes of meetings at all levels are consistently used to inform high-quality improvement practices. Management and practitioners use the Aistear, Siolta Practice Guide as part of their review processes in the identification of areas for improvement.

• Management promotes very high standards and a clear vision for the work of the setting. The setting’s mission to develop the whole child and its commitment to dignity, diversity and mutual respect clearly guides practitioners’ practice.

• Continuing professional development is highly valued. At the regular team meetings, practitioners’ training needs are identified and progressed. Recent training includes practitioners’ upskilling with regard to specialised feeding apparatus and support for children’s physical needs. Systems are in place to ensure practitioners regularly liaise with members of the multi-disciplinary team to support children’s individual needs.

• Exemplary communication strategies have been established between the setting and parents. There is a commendable culture of partnership with parents. Some of the strategies include, the children’s daily communication book used by parents, practitioners and members of the multi-disciplinary team, the many informative notices on display, and the facilitation of individual meetings between the manager and parents, and practitioners and parents. Throughout the pre-school year, information meetings are facilitated regarding supports for the children. These include information on communication aids.

• There are well-organised practices in place to support children in their transitions into and out of the setting. Prior to commencing the ECCE programme, the majority of children attend a sister programme offered by ChildVision. In preparation for their participation in the ECCE programme, children visit the pre-school room to meet the practitioners. On commencing the setting, there is a very flexible approach to assisting children to settle at their own pace.

• As children transition from the setting to primary school, the practitioners complete a strengths-based ‘All About Me’ form. The principal of a local primary school and the visiting teacher meet with the practitioners and manager to discuss the children’s individual learning needs and to support children’s transition to primary school.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The capacity of the setting to implement the actions advised above is excellent. Management and practitioners demonstrate a very strong commitment to the ongoing provision of high-quality learning experiences and outcomes for the children attending ChildVision.
### Summary of Overall Inspection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quality Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of context to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of processes to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of children’s learning experiences and achievements</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
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### Language used in Early Years Education Inspection reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</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 Co-ordinator and setting manager of ChildVision’s pre-school (EYS) fully accept the report as the final inspection report. We were delighted with the high level of interest shown to the service’s specific setting and challenges in relation to the visual impairments and other difficulties of the children attending and appreciate the advice given on the day of the inspection and following same.
- In relation to the area of "quality of processes to support children’s learning and development", which received a “very good” grading, the suggestion of tailoring and implementing the curriculum to further improve the service in this area has been taken up.

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

The following have now been implemented in relation to improving the area of "quality of processes to support children’s learning and development.

- Research into current suggestions of good practice within the above area, which included NCSE guidelines as suggested by the Inspection report. The areas which related to assessment and individual planning aided in the adaptation of our progress of learning forms.
- In ChildVision pre-school ensuring a positive approach to the children's learning and abilities is something we strongly promote. Therefore we have revised the “Learning Tracks” framework to reflect the ages and variety of the ability levels to ensure all the children’s learning is captured.
- We have modified our recording material to relate directly to specific learning goals, which are education-led and influences by the Aistear framework and the child's individual education plan.