EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Baggot Tots</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>22 Baggot Rd</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Navan Rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dublin 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>09DY0171</td>
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Date of Inspection: 13-03-2019
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>13-03-2019</th>
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| Inspection activities undertaken | Interaction with children  
Observation of interactions during a session  
Interaction with children  
Review of relevant documents  
Feedback to practitioners |

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Baggot Tots is a privately owned, sessional and after-school setting. It has been in operation for over twenty years. It provides a morning session for children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. On the day of the inspection, eighteen children and two 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 good.
- There is a positive and friendly atmosphere in the setting. Parents and children are greeted warmly on arrival and at home time.
- The established daily routine mainly comprises whole-group activities and individual learning experiences which include free play, circle time, outdoor activities, table-top activities and snack time.
- The practitioners use a variety of effective strategies to inform children of changes in activities. Examples include a visual daily schedule and verbal reminders. On the day of the inspection, a few transitions were overly long and this resulted in a small number of children becoming inattentive. There is potential for transition times to be optimised as learning opportunities for all children.
- The children have regular opportunities to engage in child-initiated play where they make independent decisions with regard to their learning.
- Relationships between the practitioners and the children are respectful and affirming. Encouragement of the children for their efforts in activities and the promotion of positive child-child interactions are a regular feature of the practitioners’ effective practice.
- The children’s sense of identity and belonging is fostered through the good use of imagery and photographs. These include the family tree, the photographic displays of the children engaged in learning activities, the people in our community pictures and the entries in the children’s individual learning books.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to review the daily routine to provide opportunities for the children to participate in regular, planned, small-group learning experiences. This will support the facilitation of learning experiences that focus on the children’s individual interests and their stages of development.
- The practitioners are advised to develop additional strategies to use at transition times to help children experience smooth and fluid transitions. This could include the use of rhymes, songs and playful activities.

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.
- The setting’s curriculum is informed by Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. A blend of a play-based curriculum and the Montessori approach to early education is evident in the provision of appropriate learning activities and experiences.
- In general, planning for the children’s learning is predominantly thematic and long-term in nature. It includes reference to seasonal events and activities which are based on the practitioners’ ideas and which are linked to the themes of Aistear.
• The practitioners use a variety of assessment methods to record the children's learning, including _Aistear_ learning records, checklists, photographs and the children's art work. The findings from these assessments are not used to inform the next steps in children’s learning.

• Interactions between the practitioners and the children are affirming. During the inspection, the practitioners sat alongside the children and were comfortable as they sensitively encouraged the children to move their play to the next level. The practitioners’ occasional use of open-ended questions and comments to enhance the children’s understanding was noted positively.

• The indoor learning environment has a number of defined areas which are well-resourced and used purposefully to support children’s participation and enjoyment in their learning. The children have regular access to an outdoor area where they can run around and use bikes and scooters. On the day of the inspection, there was a small amount of real, open-ended and natural materials available to stimulate children's exploration and experimentation of their learning.

• The children have sufficient opportunities to participate in child-initiated play activities, such as socio-dramatic play, imaginative play and sensorial play on their own and with their peers.

• The practitioners effectively facilitate learning experiences that promote children’s emergent language and literacy skills. Examples include story-time and rhyming activities which children enthusiastically engaged in during the inspection.

**Actions advised**

• The practitioners are advised to further develop planning and assessment practices that are more cognisant of the children's emergent interests and their individual learning needs. The use of the ‘Planning and Assessment’ pillar from the _Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide_ could assist in this regard.

• The practitioners are advised to increase their use of open-ended questions and commentary in their interactions with the children. This will help the practitioners to extend the children’s thinking and communication skills. The use of the tip sheet ‘Thinking Together’ from the _Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide_ may be beneficial.

• The practitioners are advised to use the audit tool in the _Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide_ to enhance the availability, breadth and variety of real, open-ended and natural materials. This will support children’s enquiry-based learning experiences and provide more opportunities for them to be sufficiently challenged.

**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 interest and motivation in their learning. On the day of the inspection, they displayed positive learning dispositions, including perseverance, creativeness and concentration. Examples observed included two children’s persistence at building their Lego creation and individual children’s concentration as they completed their self-selected puzzles.

• The children experienced success during the session. A few children demonstrated the ability to discuss their achievements with each other and with the practitioners.

• In order to raise the children’s awareness of others in the community, visits to the setting from members of the local community are facilitated. These include visits from a swimming instructor and a librarian.

• The children’s creativity and imagination are promoted through some activities, including playdough and free mark making as they paint. At the time of the inspection, there was an overuse of templates for colouring-in activities and product-focused art and craft.

• The majority of the children demonstrate appropriate social skills for their age and stage of development. During the inspection, it was clearly evident that a significant number of children have formed friendships and that they are acquiring the skills necessary to respond to social interactions. A small number of children required the practitioners’ support to help them resolve minor issues of social conflict with others.

• Many children are developing emergent numeracy skills, such as classification, counting and an understanding of money and cost. On the day of the inspection, children were observed counting objects and spontaneously discussing the triangular shapes of various objects.

**Actions advised**

• It is advised that further opportunities be provided for children to share their learning and achievements with others. This could be facilitated through regular, small-group activities and opportunities for children to review their learning journals with each other and with the practitioners.

• The practitioners are advised to provide additional opportunities to enable the children to participate in more mark-making and process-focused, art activities. Their exposure to experiences where they can be freely creative and express themselves will assist in this regard. It is also advised that the use of templates for colouring in and mark-making activities be reduced.
AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.
- There is a good ethos of teamwork and professionalism among the pre-school team at Baggot Tots. Appropriate systems of communication have been established between the owner and practitioners. The owner and the practitioners engage in informal review discussions on a daily basis. At the monthly team meetings, areas in need of improvement are identified and discussed in order to support improvement in practice. The Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide has yet to be used as part of these practices.
- Occasionally during the pre-school year, informal one-to-one support and supervision meetings take place between the owner and the practitioners. There is potential to use these meetings to explore the practitioners’ roles and responsibilities.
- The practitioners have participated in training on mandatory topics, such as, First Aid and Children First. The setting is a member of Early Childhood Ireland and avails of support from the county childcare committee.
- The good culture of consultation and communication with parents regarding their child includes the daily sharing of information on the children’s learning, the parents’ notice boards in the lobby and the children’s individual learning books which go home on a monthly basis. At the time of the inspection, information on the curriculum was not contained in the parents’ handbook.
- There are effective strategies in place to support children’s transition into and from the setting. Children are invited to visit the setting and meet the practitioners and other children prior to commencing the pre-school programme. Props and resources to enhance children’s understanding around moving to primary school are available to the children. This aids the facilitation of discussions between the practitioners and children on what happens at school.

Actions advised

- Management and practitioners are advised to use the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide to help them further develop formal self-review and professional reflection practices. During the team meetings they could use the guide to develop an action plan to address agreed prioritised areas for improvement. This practice could commence with a review of the parents’ handbook to include information on the curriculum.
- National training to support practitioners in the use of Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework is to be offered to early-years settings in 2019. Participation in this programme could support the practitioners as part of their continuing professional development.
- It is advised that formal support and supervision systems be developed and used to explore the practitioners’ roles and responsibilities. This could include the implementation of a key worker approach. This approach is one in which each practitioner is assigned particular responsibility for a small group of children and act as a link between the pre-school and the parents of these children.

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>
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<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>
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<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Good</td>
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</table>

### 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

We value the Inspection process. It gives us the opportunity to re-evaluate our practices. Having an independent third party assess our practices and delivery of a pre-school service is hugely beneficial to all stakeholders. The report has made us look at changes we can make to enhance the quality of learning, development and enjoyment in Baggot Tots.

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 introduced more small group sessions into our daily routines. It has had several benefits. Not only does the session run more smoothly but it is much easier to identify emerging interests. Smaller groups benefit the quieter child who tends to get lost in a bigger group.
- We are monitoring our transition times to ensure structured transition from one activity to the next, but keeping in mind that a good game sometimes needs an extra minute or so for a sense of completion, or a job well done. The ‘tidy up song’ has been reintroduced.

Area 2

- We are referring to the Aistear, Siolta Practice guide on a regular basis and are introducing more open ended materials such as big cardboard boxes, mud kitchen, natural materials such as pine cones and more outside time.
- We have introduced real life items such as phones, and remotes controls to the facility and will continue to introduce ‘real’ items on a continuous basis.

Area 3

- One on one time is now set aside for working on the children’s’ Journals. They are fully involved in what does or does not get included in their Journal.
- Additionally they now have a choice on what piece of art work gets displayed, or put in their Journal or put in their bag to send home.
- The use of Templates has been hugely reduced.

Area 4

- Work on a new revised parent’s handbook is planned for the summer.
- The key worker approach will be introduced in September with the new group of children.
- Training in Aistear will be accessed for staff in the coming months.
- Going forward more formal team meetings will be planned including agendas and outcomes.