

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Setting Name	Avenir Montessori
Setting Address	6 Huntstown Road Mulhuddart Dublin 15
DCYA number	09FL0045

Date of Inspection: 06-12-2019



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agus Scileanna
Department of
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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	06-12-2019
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction with children • Review of relevant documents • Feedback to setting owner/practitioner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with setting owner/practitioner • Observation of interactions during a morning session 	

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Avenir Montessori is a privately owned, sessional setting in operation for twenty years. It provides one morning session for children partaking in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. On the day of the inspection eight children, who are in their first or second year of the ECCE programme, the owner/practitioner and one volunteer were in attendance. The owner/practitioner 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.
- The atmosphere is very welcoming, warm and affirming. When addressing the children, the practitioner uses even tones at all times. The children are developing secure relationships with their practitioner.
- A daily routine is in place for the children which supports their understanding of the broad daily schedule of activities. Currently this is not provided as a visual timeline for the children.
- The practitioner uses verbal cues and a timer to support children's transitions from one activity to another.
- The children are encouraged to be independent and hang up their coats on arrival at the setting.
- The practitioner sits and chats with the children at snack time. Healthy eating is promoted.
- The practitioner models positive behaviour very well using calm tones, 'please' and 'thank you'. She offers consistent relevant praise and encouragement to the children.
- The uniqueness of each child is celebrated and affirmed. They have their own personal journals, and there are individual and group photos, and a family photo display. On the day of the inspection, there was a birthday celebration. This was very nurturing, and involved a parent of the birthday child. The practitioner used a photograph of the child as a baby to celebrate the child's uniqueness and the importance of birthday celebrations.
- Parents are very involved at the setting. The practitioner chats with the children's families at arrival and collection times. Parents and families visit the setting, and share their cultural backgrounds, interests and occupations. They are invited to attend birthday events, Christmas craft workshops, and graduation at a local play centre.
- The setting is connected with the local community and a photograph album is located in the book area. This provides a visual display of local community representatives and local landmarks relevant to the children's lives, such as a local primary school, post office and a pharmacy.

Action advised

- It is advised that a visual routine be made available for the children to further support their understanding of the schedules in their day. It is further advised that the daily routine be displayed for parents, so that they are aware of the daily activities, and can support their child's learning development.

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.
- Provision is informed by the Montessori pedagogy and *Aistear; the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* and an emergent curriculum is in place. Long-term, medium-term and short-term plans are developed and the short-term curriculum plan is visible to parents. The *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* is used to inform and guide practice, but is not systematically used for curriculum evaluation and review.
- Children's learning is assessed using different approaches including Montessori mastery checklists, photographs, personal learning journals for each child and a group floor book which records the group learning. This floor book contains photos and records of activities and events. The practitioner keeps detailed notes about each child's learning and conducts strengths-based observations which support the next steps in learning for individual children. Monthly meetings are held with parents to discuss children's learning and development.
- Very good interactions were observed between the practitioner and the children on the day of the inspection. The practitioner effectively extended and engaged children's thinking and language development. Open-ended questions and prompts were effectively used and there was a very good balance between child-led and adult-led practice.
- The indoor environment is well laid out with a range of accessible resources. It comprises two rooms, with seamless access and defined interest areas. Resources include a range of Montessori and play materials. These include props for socio-dramatic play, a home corner and an art area. Very good manipulative materials support children with their fine motor skills.
- There is a print-rich environment across the setting featuring posters, projects displays and a dedicated book area. Books are rotated periodically. The books relate to the themes of *Aistear*, the setting's activities and they reflect diversity and various interests. Books in the children's home languages are included. Labelling within the learning environment is currently not evident.
- The outdoor environment is very nurturing and has been creatively developed to support children's learning through play. It provides opportunities for the development of children's gross motor skills and ample opportunities to support rich imaginative play experiences. There are trees, a woodpile, a vegetable garden, a bug house, a friendship bench, a climbing frame, rockers, a slide, hula hoops, and resources for sand play.
- Practice is very inclusive at this setting and an inclusion policy is implemented.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to systematically use the self- evaluation forms in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* to evaluate her practice.
- Consistent labelling of the learning environment is required to further support the informal development of early literacy and language skills.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is very good.
- The children demonstrate enjoyment and motivation in the activities and resources available. During the inspection, they engaged enthusiastically in a blindfold game which they particularly enjoyed.
- The children take responsibility for their own self-care and a visual reminder such as 'how to wash our hands' supports them with this. They respond well at tidy-up time using a tidy-up song.
- The children engage well with the books available to them; they read independently and in pairs.
- The children make decisions as a group on what songs they would like to sing, negotiating well with each other in doing so.
- The children have ample opportunities for physical exercise and play in their outdoor environment. Due to very inclement weather they did not get to use the outdoor area on the day of the inspection. They engaged with alternative physical activities indoors.

- The children are involved in recycling regularly and they are very aware of the living environment. They recently picked blackberries from the garden and they check their bug hotel regularly.
- Some children have drawn very imaginative self-portraits. Their process art is scribed for them by the practitioner and their creations are unique and imaginative.
- The majority of the children have a strong awareness of their own wellbeing and they are supported in self-regulation. Currently, displays relating to emotions are not provided in the environment.

Action advised

- It is advised that emotion displays are continually displayed so that they are available to the children to support them to name and understanding their emotions.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
- The owner is highly organised and demonstrates a strong commitment to her practice.
- A comments and complaints policy is in place and the practitioner welcomes parents' feedback. Currently parents are not involved in evaluation and review.
- The setting welcomes students who wish to avail of work experience opportunities.
- The practitioner engages in regular continuous professional development and engages with her local county childcare committee. Most recent training has been in fundamental movement and in diversity and equality.
- The setting operates an open-door policy.
- Monthly newsletters are provided to parents and two parent meetings are held each year to discuss children's learning and development. A copy of the settings policies and procedures and a parent handbook are in situ. Informal verbal communication takes place on a daily basis and through social media.
- The children are supported well to transition in and out of the setting. They visit the setting in advance of starting with their parents. The children's transition to school is supported through a transitions policy and this topic is addressed as part of the setting's curriculum.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to extend her partnership with parents. It would be beneficial to include parents in the setting's evaluations and reviews of practice. The 'Parent Partnerships' pillar in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* will provide a guide to this.
- It is advised that the transitions policy be extended to include information on the practices used to support transitions into the setting and within the setting.

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.

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:

A visual daily routine is displayed in the classroom to support children. The daily routine is displayed at the front door for parents.

Area 2:

A time frame is set for using the self-evaluation forms in the Aistear, Siolta Practice Guide. (At least once a year for each area)

The shelves in the classroom and the corresponding bins/baskets are labelled with matching pictures or word labels.

Area 3:

A poster with pictures of different emotions is displayed permanently on the wall of the classroom in order to support children to name and understand their emotions.

Area 4:

In order to extend my partnership with parents I am asking them for their input in our curriculum at the parent/teacher's meetings. I am including their suggestions and ideas in my future planning. I am designing a parent survey for the end of the school year in order to get a feedback on children's experiences and ideas for improvement.

Currently am working on extending my transitions policy as advised.