An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Early-Years Education-focused Inspection

REPORT

Corpus Christi Preschool
09LY0023

Corpus Christi National School
Moyross
Limerick
CONTEXT OF SETTING

Corpus Christi Preschool is a community-based service situated within the Corpus Christi Primary School building, Moyross in Limerick city. It provides a sessional service for children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. The setting has a room leader and two assistants. Twenty children typically attend. On the day of the inspection, seventeen children were present. The setting was given the opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised in this report; the service chose to accept the report without a response.

AREA 1
QUALITY OF CONTEXT TO SUPPORT CHILDREN’S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

• The quality of the context to support children’s learning and development is excellent.
• A warm and welcoming atmosphere is generated. The practitioners praise the children regularly and they demonstrate positive regard towards their families.
• Routines and procedures are very clear. The children’s independence in managing their own hygiene needs is promoted and at snack time, social interaction is encouraged.
• The room leader uses excellent strategies to ease transitions, including song-singing, recitation of rhymes, visualisation and simple routines. These are highly effective in unifying the group and in encouraging readiness for the next task.
• Numerous systems are in place to nurture the children’s sense of belonging. Their photographs, individual drawings and work in mark making, together with information about their families are displayed and referred to frequently throughout the morning, in group discussions and on a one-to-one basis. Children’s names are displayed and used in many practical ways, including an effective ‘checking in’ system, whereby the children record their own attendance informally each morning.

AREA 2
QUALITY OF PROCESSES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN’S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

• The quality of the processes to support children’s learning and development is very good.
• Planning is organised on a long-term, medium-term and short-term basis and it is informed by themes from Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework and by children’s emerging interests. While written and photographic records relating to children’s learning experiences are carefully maintained, there is potential for stronger links to be generated between assessments and planning.
• Very good quality interactions are noted between the practitioners and the children and the quality of play is very good overall. A very good balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated learning is achieved. At times, the children’s independence is somewhat limited as they are reliant on the practitioners to access resources for them.
• The attractive and well-resourced indoor environment is used purposefully to promote exploration and play. The school hall is used for physical exercises and activities which promote the development of the children’s gross motor skills. While a suitable outdoor environment is available, on the day of the inspection this environment was not used.
• The setting is very inclusive. Considerable practical steps are taken to assist families in accessing the setting and to encourage regular attendance. External professionals, including a speech therapist, provide advice to the setting on how to support children with additional needs.

Actions advised
• In documenting observations of children, the dispositions and skills which the children are exhibiting and developing should be outlined, so that more meaningful links can be generated between assessments and planning.
• The setting needs to ensure that the children can access a broad range of resources more freely in the course of their play.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

• The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is very good.
• Procedures and rules are clearly understood by the children. Their skills in turn-taking and co-operating are developing well and they are building very good relationships with their peers.
• The children demonstrate curiosity and very good levels of interest in most of the activities. However, on the day of the inspection, some of the table-top activities observed were protracted and the children’s interest waned as the activities progressed.
• Activities to promote children’s early competences in literacy are of a very good quality. In particular, the story session observed was highly successful in engaging the children and developing some early-literacy skills. Informal opportunities to promote early mathematical understandings are very well exploited.

Action advised
• A review of the timetable and structure of the morning could be carried out with a view to ensuring that the children experience a more favourable balance between table-top activities, play, physical activities and activities in the outdoor environment.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

• The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
• The management and staff reflect on their practice on a daily basis, in an informal manner.
• The manager sets high standards for the work of the setting and she has established very good systems to ensure efficiency in its day-to-day functioning. She is ably assisted by the two practitioners; their roles in leading some activities could be further developed.
• There is a high level of cooperation between the setting and various agencies and external professionals. It is evident that this has contributed to the practitioners’ knowledge and skills.
• Very good links are established between setting and the children’s families. A clear information booklet is made available to parents and meetings with parents are held.
• There is a high level of communication and cooperation between the preschool and primary school settings. This is proving to be very beneficial in ensuring consistency in the children’s early educational experiences.

Actions advised
• More formal discussions based on the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide would be beneficial in assisting the setting to work towards more focused and sustained improvement.
• There is potential for the room leader to delegate more focused leadership roles to the two practitioners, as a means of developing and broadening their overall skills.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The manager and the practitioners engaged well in professional dialogue around the key findings of the inspection and they demonstrated good capacity to implement the actions advised above.
### Summary of Overall Inspection Findings

<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>Very 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>Quality</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<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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