Early-Years Education-focused Inspection

REPORT

Clanmaurice Pre-school
09LY0031

Ennis Road
Limerick

Date of inspection: 09 May 2016
CONTEXT OF SETTING

Clanmaurice Pre-school provides a sessional service for children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. It is located in Limerick city. The setting has a room leader and two assistants. Twenty-seven children typically attend. On the day of the inspection, seventeen children were present. The setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised in this report, and the response submitted on behalf 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 children’s learning and development is excellent.
- A caring ethos and a welcoming atmosphere are in evidence.
- There are very strong and well-established links between the setting, the families and the community. Purposeful efforts are made to welcome the children and their parents in the morning.
- It is apparent that secure and respectful relationships have been established between the practitioners and the children.
- Routines are very well established and understood by the children. These are effective in supporting children’s social and emotional security. During times of transition, the children assume responsibility in the day-to-day tasks such as tidying up and preparing for snack time. They respond very well to their assigned roles and responsibilities.
- Snack time is an enjoyable and social occasion and it is used by the practitioners to promote and encourage healthy lifestyles.
- Children’s sense of belonging is well nurtured. Deliberate efforts are made by the practitioners to acknowledge the children’s efforts and to highlight their achievements to their peers.

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 informed by themes from Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework and by children’s emerging interests. The practitioners document their observations of the children throughout the session. These are used to some degree in informing planning. Effective systems are in place to inform parents about their child’s development and learning.
- High-quality interactions are noted between the children and the practitioners.
- The setting is very inclusive; the various strengths and needs of children are recognised and the advice of external professionals is sought and implemented to support children who present with additional needs.
- The children are afforded independence in their explorations and in their play. The practitioners question and prompt the children in a very skilled manner during play and, in this way, the children’s learning is very well extended.
- The indoor environment is very effective in supporting the children’s learning and development.
- The outdoor environment incorporates good resources and some very attractive features which broaden the range of experiences for the children. In particular, the children enjoy multi-sensory experiences by exploring a range of plants and a stimulating sound wall.
- Children’s emerging language, literacy, and numeracy skills are very well fostered, through rhymes, games and songs. While story-time is a regular feature of the day, there is scope for some improvements in this area.

Actions advised
- To optimise the effectiveness of the planning processes, the practitioners’ observations of children’s progress could be used in a more focused manner.
The quality of story time could be enhanced by reducing the size of the groups involved and by establishing routines which promote concentration and listening.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of children’s learning experiences is excellent.
- It is evident that the children are highly engaged and motivated. They demonstrate high levels of independence and resourcefulness and their ability to play independently, and to co-operate in groups is noteworthy.
- The children play with a very broad range of resources and materials. Through the various activities they are developing language skills, a rich vocabulary, early skills in reading, and fine and gross motor skills. They are confident communicators and many of them demonstrate excellent ability to discuss, to question and to extend conversations. The children enjoy mark-making activities and they explore and use symbols, pictures and numbers in their writing activities. Through rhymes, songs and informal activities, they are developing a very good early understanding of number.
- The children demonstrate a very good appreciation for the natural environment. They interact with real items from the environment and they discuss posters and displays which feature aspects of the real environments.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is excellent.
- The setting has outlined a very clear mission statement and it is clear that it has experienced success in its implementation.
- There is a strong ethos of professionalism amongst the full team. They work in partnership and clear roles are delegated and carried out throughout the session. They have engaged in significant training and they continue to engage in professional development.
- The practitioners collaborate very effectively and they meet regularly to share their expertise, to discuss their observations and to plan for the next steps in the children's learning. It is evident that the team shares a clear vision for the work of the setting and for future development and improvement.
- There are frequent face-to-face communications with parents and a clear information folder is provided to parents at the time of enrolment in the setting.
- Very good links have been established with the local primary schools. This provides a solid basis for the exchange of information relating to the children and it facilitates continuity in the children’s learning experiences.

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>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality 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>
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<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

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to address the actions advised in the inspection report

Actions taken:

• Greater use will be made of observations to inform planning.
• Morning transition from home into pre-school is now well enhanced by the use of a ‘Post Box’ where children post in their own designed card which includes their name.
• Storytime – We are using a ‘Listening Bear’ called Ginger to support the transition into story time. This has proved to be very successful. We are also splitting the large group of children into smaller groups for storytelling and, finally, we are using a ‘quiet voice’ approach.
• We are using the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide for both the indoor and outdoor environments. All areas are now being reflected on using the Plan, Do and Review method.