# EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

## REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Totsville Playschool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>68 Racehill Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ashbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>County Meath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>09MH0198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date of Inspection: 25-10-2018
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of inspection</th>
<th>25-10-2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspection activities undertaken</td>
<td>Interaction and discussion with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review of relevant setting documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review of records of children’s learning and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feedback discussion with setting owner/practitioner and early years practitioner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONTEXT OF SETTING**

Totsville Playschool, established in 2007, provides a morning pre-school session for children enrolled on the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. The owner/practitioner, one early year’s practitioner and seven children were present on the day on the inspection. The setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised in this report, the setting chose to accept the report without response.

**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 warm and welcoming atmosphere in this setting. The practitioners recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with families and dedicate time for relaxed and informal conversations each day.
- There is an operational open-door policy and on the day of inspection, parents were confident and comfortable coming into and spending time in the playroom.
- The practitioners know each child well and interact with them in a gentle and positive manner. In their efforts to care for the children, it was observed that the practitioners did many things for them that they could begin to learn to do for themselves.
- There is a consistent daily routine in place. It is displayed for parents but not for the children. It was observed that the current routine allocates substantial periods of time for practitioner-led activities and less time for child-selected play and learning activities. The current routine necessitates frequent transitions from one activity to the next.
- The practitioners provide some support for the children’s developing sense of identity and belonging through frequent conversations about themselves and the group’s shared experiences.
- Family members are invited into the setting to celebrate events with the children.

*Actions advised*

- It is advised that practitioners support the children to become independent, confident and competent in managing their own self-help and self-care skills.
- To ensure that children are active agents in their learning, it is advised that the number of practitioner-led activities be reduced. It is also advised that the daily routine be displayed in an appropriate format for the children.
- To further nurture the children developing sense of identity and belonging, it is advised that practitioners introduce activities, displays and artefacts that will support the children to explore who they are as individuals, as a pre-school group, as a member of their families and as members of their local community.
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 fair.
- The setting implements a play-based curriculum which is aligned to Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. The curriculum programme is not documented.
- Planning for practitioner-initiated activities is centred on projects and themes which are mapped out for the year ahead. Planning does not currently take account of the children’s varying interests, strengths and developmental levels.
- The practitioners complete some narrative observations and checklists on the children’s achievement of developmental milestones. At present, this observation and assessment system does not capture the breadth and richness of the children’s learning and it does not inform the planning for progression in the children’s learning.
- The indoor learning environment is large and attractive. There is a moderate range of resources available which is predominantly toy and plastic. There is a limited supply of open-ended materials within the indoor and outdoor environment.
- The practitioners are attentive to the children and were actively engaged with them throughout the session observed. They promote language development through frequent conversations and use songs and rhymes that have mathematical themes with the children effectively.

Actions advised
- It is advised that practitioners develop and document a broad-based curriculum to support the children’s learning and development.
- Practitioners are advised to expand and enhance the methods used to observe and record the children’s learning, their emerging interests, strengths, developmental needs and achievements.
- It is advised that practitioners develop a short-term planning system to provide playful learning experiences based on what they have observed and recorded to be currently relevant, interesting and personally meaningful to the children.
- Practitioners are advised to continue to develop the learning environment, prioritising the introduction of open-ended, real and natural materials, resources, props and tools.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is good.
- The children are well-settled in the setting and arrive in the morning eager to begin conversation and play.
- Many strong friendships among the children were observed. Many of the children are developing positive social skills which support their developing friendships.
- The children were observed to engage with high levels of motivation and to experience success during the brief time allocated for self-chosen and directed play and learning activity.
- The children were excited and motivated to engage in the practitioner-initiated and guided activity observed on the day of inspection. The manner in which the activity was structured necessitated lengthy waiting periods for the children and there were many missed opportunities for the children to engage in discussion, prediction and thinking with others about the activity undertaken.
- The children are experiencing achievement in many of their play and learning activities in ways that match their developmental levels.

Actions advised
- To support the children’s sustained and purposeful learning, it is advised that a longer time for uninterrupted child-chosen activities be provided daily.
- It is advised that the children be encouraged to take the lead, follow their curiosity and be provided with support to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings during practitioner-facilitated activities.
AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.
- There is very strong and positive team working in this setting. Roles and responsibilities are clear and shared equitably.
- The practitioners plan before and reflect after the pre-school session, verbally.
- The practitioners complete required training and are linked to local support agencies. They have not yet accessed training or on-site mentoring support on *Aistear* and *Síolta*, the two national practice frameworks.
- Information about the current theme and the daily practitioner-initiated activity is shared with parents in conversation and on a notice board located by the door.
- Information about each child’s individual progression in learning and development is shared with parents through informal conversations and at a mid-year meeting. Observations are shown to parents in the playroom as they are recorded and given to parents at the end of the pre-school year.
- The practitioners work in partnership with parents, making individualised arrangements to settle the children into the setting at the start of the pre-school year.

**Actions advised**

- To begin a quality improvement plan for the setting, it is advised that the practitioners attend the *Aistear, Síolta Training Initiative* and access on-site mentoring support from the Better Start Quality Development Service.
- It is advised that the practitioners begin to allocate time to meet regularly to review, reflect and plan for quality development and the implementation of the pre-school programme, using *Aistear* and *Síolta*, the national practice frameworks and the online *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide*.
- Practitioners are advised to develop a handbook for parents to ensure that they are fully aware of policies, procedures and the pre-school programme implemented in the setting.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The practitioners engaged professionally and openly in the feedback discussion following the inspection. With on-site mentoring support and training, the capacity of the setting to implement the actions advised outlined above is good.
### Summary of Overall Inspection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quality Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of children’s learning experiences and achievements</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Language used in Early-Years Education Inspection Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>