

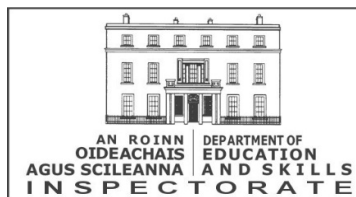
An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Early-Years Education-focused Inspection
REPORT

Naíonra Béal Átha na Muice
09MO0043

Scoil Mhuire agus Treasa
Swinford
County Mayo

Date of inspection: 14 December 2016



CONTEXT OF SETTING

Naíonra Bhéal Átha na Muice is an all-Irish pre-school, based on the site of Scoil Mhuire agus Treasa in Swinford, County Mayo. There are two pre-school rooms involved in the Early Years Care and Education Programme. On the day of the inspection, one room was visited. 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 which supports children's learning and development is very good.
- There is a positive atmosphere based on good relationships between the practitioners and the children. Parents are welcomed in the morning and at the end of the session.
- The children's activities for the term are displayed in photographic format in the hall and the parents can view and discuss them with the practitioners and the children. Connections are made to the themes in *Aistear: The Early Years Framework Curriculum*.
- The children are actively involved in selecting and choosing the learning and development activities.
- There is a pleasant atmosphere at meal times. The children are given the opportunity to converse and communicate.
- Transitions are very good. A range of strategies is used effectively such as singing, movement and the children cleaning up and putting equipment away.
- A Christmas show and an open afternoon are provided which brings children, families and practitioners together.
- The town is a very useful facility but at the time of the inspection only occasional use was made of the learning opportunities there such as the post office and the supermarket.

Action advised

- It is advised that trips to town be organised on a regular basis as a learning experience for the children.

AREA 2

QUALITY OF PROCESSES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The quality of processes which support the children's learning and development are good.
- There is long-term and short-term planning in place based on different seasons.
- The influence of *Aistear: The Early Years Framework Curriculum* is visible in the work of the setting.
- Information on the children's learning is recorded but not taken into account during planning.
- Play is the central medium through which children learn and develop in the setting. The practitioners need to develop socio-dramatic play and establish a drama corner.
- The inside environment is divided into learning areas which are accessible to the children to develop their interests, inquisitiveness, imagination and sense of exploration. Outdoor play is used on a regular basis and water, sports equipment and play mobiles are used by children in the school playground.
- There is an appropriate balance between learning and development activities which are initiated by adult and which are initiated by children.
- The richness of language of the practitioners is commended and immersion education is implemented. The home language of the children is respected and acknowledged effectively.
- The children do not have adequate terminology as yet to engage in creative role-play and drama through Irish.

Actions advised

- It is advised that the children's interests, cultural backgrounds and pre-learning experiences be taken into account in planning and that the planning be based on the *Aistear* themes.
- It is advised that a plan be formulated for the development of the children's vocabulary and language functions in Irish.

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 that they enjoy their learning. They are motivated and display an interest in the activities.
- They are aware of their competency in singing and in recitation as they prepare for the Christmas play.
- The children's progress in motor skills is evident as they work with play dough.

- The development of their personal and social skills is commendable. They take turns and co-operate with each other while engaging in free play in the morning.
- They understand the rules and boundaries of positive behaviour. The manner in which they prepare for lunch and speak respectfully to each other is commendable.
- The children interpret non-verbal communication and understand the language of the practitioners who all operate through the medium of Irish. They display their thoughts through various play activities.
- The children have completed a considerable amount of art work. It is on display in the environment.
- There is no map or photograph of the town displayed in the setting.

Actions advised

- It is advised that the experience and life of the children in the local community be linked by displaying photographs and images from the environment.
- It is advised that emphasis be placed on the children using terminology and language functions in Irish as they engage in various activities.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.
- The practitioners in the two rooms on site collaborate. They have themes for each season organised.
- *Síolta: The National High Quality Framework for Early Years Learning* isn't used to date in the setting.
- The main practitioner supports the continuing professional development of each staff member in the setting but there has been no support provided yet for operating through the medium of Irish. It would be worthwhile looking at any support that may be available through Gaeloideachas.
- Communication between parents and practitioners is very good. Poems, songs and each child's work are sent home regularly.
- Parents are informed of procedures and policies at information meetings which are organised prior to the start of the year.
- There is good communication between the primary school teachers and the practitioners which helps greatly in ensuring the continuity of experience for the children.
- The children in the setting present the Christmas play to the infant classes on an annual basis.

Actions advised

- It is advised that tools from the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* be used so that the staff can review their practices.
- It is advised that external supports be used, when available.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The lead practitioner was involved in the post-inspection feedback session at the end of the visit. She displays very good ability to implement the actions advised in the report.

Summary of Overall Inspection Findings

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	Good
Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements	Good
Quality of management and leadership for learning	Good

Language used in Early-Years Education-focused 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.

