

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Setting Name	Chatterland Playschool & Crèche
Setting Address	Palace Walk Elphin County Roscommon
DCYA number	09RN0005

Date of Inspection: 01-10-2019



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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 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	01-10-2019
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interaction with children• Review of relevant documents• Feedback to setting manager and practitioner

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Chatterland Playschool & Crèche is a privately-owned and operated setting. It was established in 2001 and is located on the outskirts of Elphin town. The setting offers full-day, sessional and after-school services. One morning session is offered to children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. On the morning of the inspection, there were eight children and one practitioner present. The early years setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised of the report; a response for publication was not received from the setting.

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.
- A very warm, friendly and homely atmosphere is evident.
- Relationships between the practitioner and the children are consistently respectful. The practitioner shows kindness and is caring in her interactions with the children.
- Verbal notice and a timer are effectively used as strategies to prepare children for a change in the daily routine. The children demonstrate familiarity with the various transitions throughout the morning and actively participate in tidying up the resources before moving onto another area/experience.
- A strong emphasis is placed on the promotion of children's independence. The practitioner repeatedly facilitates and supports the children in developing their hygiene and personal care needs.
- The daily routine consists of a variety of experiences, including child-initiated play, large group experiences and table-top activities. There is an imbalance between the adult-initiated and child-initiated learning activities and experiences. This results in children sitting for lengthy periods of time and a small number of children becoming disengaged and restless.
- Opportunities are provided for children to develop an appreciation of themselves as individuals through the many photographic displays of children and their families. During the inspection, these forms of imagery were effective in supporting children to share and discuss themselves, their parents and their siblings.
- Children are encouraged to take responsibility for looking after their environment. The 'handy helper' system is very effective in empowering children to care for both their peers and the environment. During the inspection, the helper demonstrated great pride when chosen as helper of the day; he was presented with a personalised lanyard which he wore throughout the morning.

Action advised

- The practitioner is advised to review the daily routine to ensure a more appropriate balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated learning experiences and activities. This will support children to be more actively involved in their freely-chosen learning experiences.

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 good.
- A play-based curriculum, linked to *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*, is used to support children's learning and development. Planning for children's learning focuses on seasons, themes and the children's emerging interests. The practitioner adapts and amends the curriculum plans as new interests emerge.
- Information about children's learning experiences and achievements is documented and shared in group and individual learning journals. Links between assessment approaches and curriculum plans are not strongly evident and as a result there is no planned approach to supporting the development of individual children's learning dispositions, values, attitudes, skills and understandings.
- Many effective interaction strategies are used by the practitioner to facilitate a broad range of learning experiences. For example, the practitioner actively listens to the children and regularly responds to their thoughts and ideas. Frequent use of closed questioning results in missed opportunities to stimulate children's language use and to encourage their creative thinking.
- The indoor environment is safe and well maintained. A variety of mathematical resources and real materials enrich the learning opportunities available throughout the various interest areas.
- Children have daily access to the large outdoor learning environment. This space provides a variety of learning experiences, including opportunities to develop children's physical fitness and gross motor skills.
- Specific attention is paid to the learning of children with additional needs. The setting manager and practitioner have been proactive seeking support through the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). They have established links with an AIM mentor and other external agencies with a view to optimising support for children with additional needs. The practitioner provides some additional support to accommodate the style of learning of children for whom English is an additional language.
- Many effective opportunities are provided for children to engage in a variety of play types. These include creative play, construction play, imaginative play and sensory play.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to strengthen the links between the documented observations and the curriculum plans. This will further enhance the approach in place to developing individual children's interests, needs and to build on their previous learning experiences.
- The practitioner is advised to broaden the variety of interaction strategies used. In particular, expanding on the use of open-ended questioning will assist in promoting and supporting children's language and thinking skills.
- The practitioner is advised to give more focused attention to the learning of children for whom English is an additional language. For example, consideration could be given as to how the children's home-languages, cultures and customs can be further acknowledged and celebrated throughout the learning programme.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is good.
- Children present as happy and they demonstrate motivation and interest in their learning experiences. This is particularly evident during their freely-chosen experiences and activities.
- Many of the children display a sense of success during their learning experiences. For example, children call on the practitioner to share their achievements.
- The children have choice and make decisions about their learning during brief periods of child-initiated learning experiences.
- Children demonstrate a developing awareness of their individual identities. During the inspection, the children were regularly observed sharing farming stories from home with other children and the practitioner.
- Many children display effective social skills, such as the ability to co-operate and to build relationships. During turn-taking situations, the children rely heavily on the intervention of the practitioner to enable them to respond appropriately to different situations.
- The majority of children present with effective communication skills. They listen, ask questions, seek clarification and use language to express their ideas and feelings.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to increase the opportunities provided for children to choose and organise their own learning. Providing children with greater agency over their learning would further strengthen their interest, motivation and engagement in all learning experiences. A review of the daily routine will further support this.
- The practitioner is advised to build on the ways in which the children are supported to develop their personal and social skills. Providing the children with the necessary skills and tools to independently resolve their own minor conflicts would be of great benefit in enhancing their conflict resolution skills.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
- The setting manager and the practitioner demonstrate a clear commitment to their roles in providing quality learning experiences and outcomes for children.
- The practitioner engages in brief reflective practice, such as reviewing the implementation of the curriculum plans.
- Whole-setting meetings are held throughout the year where the setting manager and all practitioners reflect on and review practice, policies and procedures in the setting.
- The manager and practitioner have both been proactive in engaging in continuing professional learning opportunities. The manager has completed the Leadership for Inclusion (LINC) programme, and the manager and the practitioners have recently enrolled in the newly developed 'Aistear and Play' workshops.
- The manager maintains strong links with members of the local county childcare committee who regularly offer support and guidance to the setting.
- Communication with parents is mostly informal. The manager meets with parents at the setting door and engages in brief and informal conversations. Various channels of communication are used to exchange information with parents. These include a parents' noticeboard and a texting system where the setting's opening days and hours are shared with parents.
- Children's individual folders are shared with parents on a monthly basis. Parents sign their child's observations and return the folder to the setting.
- New children starting in the setting are offered a flexible setting-in period and parents are welcomed to stay and support their child. Children moving between rooms in the setting visit the new rooms throughout the year to become familiar with their new environments and the practitioner.

- As children prepare to move onto primary school, the after-school children are reportedly invited to meet with the children in the ECCE room and to share their experiences. The practitioner also reads books that support open discussion around what children can expect when they move onto primary school. At present, there are no formal links with the local primary schools where information could be shared between parents, the practitioner and the primary schools.

Actions advised

- The setting manager and the practitioner are advised to strengthen and formalise the ways in which practice is evaluated in the setting. The *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* online tool is a useful resource to support such professional practice.
- In consultation with the setting manager, the practitioner is advised to develop working relationships with the neighbouring primary schools. By making connections with the primary schools, information can be shared between both settings to support continuity of experiences and progression in children's learning.

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	Good
Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements	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.