EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Fethard Community Playgroup</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>Rocklow Road</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fethard</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>County Tipperary</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>09TS0031</td>
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Date of Inspection: 01-10-2018
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>01-10-2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inspection activities undertaken</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Pre-inspection meeting with setting manager</td>
<td>• Interaction with the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Observation of interactions during the morning and afternoon sessions</td>
<td>• Review of relevant setting documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review of educational resources and facilities</td>
<td>• Review of records of children’s learning and development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Post-inspection feedback with the setting manager and practitioners</td>
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**CONTEXT OF SETTING**

Fethard Community Playgroup is a not for profit pre-school setting, offering the Early Childhood Care and Education [ECCE] programme for children attending on a sessional basis. It operates morning and afternoon sessions and is located in a stand-alone building adjacent to a scout’s hall and a primary school in Fethard. It provides care and education for children from diverse cultural backgrounds, a number of whom speak English as an additional language. On the day of the inspection, the manager and two practitioners worked with a total of thirty-one children across both sessions. In addition, there were two staff employed under Access and Inclusion Model [AIM] supports. 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 excellent.
- The welcoming and caring atmosphere fostered for each child and their family is commendable. The practitioners know the children and their families well.
- Respectful interactions are nurtured; parents and family members spend time in the room at arrival and departure times.
- Secure relationships are nurtured within the key worker approach embedded in the setting. Each practitioner is responsible for monitoring and planning learning experiences for a dedicated number of children. The child’s key worker is identified to the child’s parents.
- Routines are consistently implemented giving children a sense of security in being able to predict what will happen next. The children follow their interest in playing inside or outside during the ample free play time.
- The transitions within the routine are kept to a minimum. They are smooth and promote continuity in learning during the session.
- The practitioners reliably guide children’s positive behaviour. They promote children’s independent problem solving skills to manage interpersonal conflicts. A number of suitable visual displays reinforce understanding and management of emotions.
- Exemplary practice connects and integrates the setting with the local community. This greatly enriches children’s sense of identity and belonging. A comprehensive schedule of visits to and from key services and personnel supports a sense of community. All visits are documented and available for children and parents to reflect on.
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 very good.
- The curriculum incorporates play-based values and the HighScope preschool curriculum. It is well informed by Aistear; the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework.
- The practitioners prepare long-term and short-term planning to inform their practice. Short-term plans for small and large group activities take very good consideration of children’s emergent interests.
- Information about children’s learning is regularly documented and builds a rich picture of their learning experiences. Each practitioner records and interprets observational notes for their group of children. The sharing of assessment information with parents will be a key next step in this process.
- The learning environments are well organised to support children's learning through a wide range of play types. The children benefit from a wide range of experiences that foster their curiosity and creativity. The easy flow of play between the indoor and outdoor environments supports children to make decisions about their learning. The planned extension to the outdoors will offer a natural space with opportunities for increased physical play.
- Practitioners respectfully engage with the children using a range of highly effective interaction strategies. They support children’s understanding by listening and prompting discussion using open-ended questions.
- The practitioners frequently model appropriate vocabulary, including mathematical language. Access to a wide variety of books, mark making materials and the use of songs provide meaningful experiences to nurture language and literacy. At the time of the inspection, children’s home languages had not yet been incorporated into provision.
- Children with additional needs are supported to participate in the experiences and opportunities for learning. Practitioners work collaboratively to implement individual access and inclusion plans with specific goals identified. Specialist agencies are involved; their support, advice and guidance is welcomed. Commendably, the setting links with a local parental group to advocate for supports.

Actions advised
- Practitioners are advised to ensure parents are provided with regular access to the information gathered on their child’s learning and development.
- It is advised that the variety of children’s home languages be made visible within the environments. This will enhance provision for literacy and numeracy.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is excellent.
- The children demonstrate self-confidence and self-assurance. They are very active and display enjoyment in their learning.
- There are excellent opportunities for the children to take responsibility for their own learning during the routines. They display resourcefulness and other positive learning dispositions. This was illustrated by the children moving materials around the environment to pursue interests.
- The children enjoy friendships with each other and confidently and competently engage with their peers in sustained play.
- Children experience success in their learning. They regularly engage in opportunities to plan and reflect on their playful activities and experiences.
- Each child expresses themselves in a variety of ways. Role-play, problem solving and mark-making in scrapbooks are features of good practice.
- The children confidently use their developing language skills to give and receive information and notably ask questions.
They consistently explore and experiment in the indoor and outdoor learning environments using their fine and gross motor skills to manipulate objects and materials.

Highly engaging activities and materials are available for the children to develop an understanding of the natural world. Planting is a regular activity and a space is provided indoors to explore natural materials. On the day of the inspection, children brought in items to show, discuss and add to the table of interest.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is excellent.
- The playgroup is very well organised and managed. The management committee support practitioners in the implementation of quality systems and provision. This ensures the sustainability of effective practices.
- The vision, ethos and associated goals are influenced by a shared understanding of the centrality of play in early learning.
- The self-review process is well focused on identifying strengths and ensuring ongoing improvement. Since their engagement with the Better Start mentoring programme, the practitioners use the materials in the Aistear Siolta Practice Guide to inform self-assessment. The implementation of the curriculum is monitored and reviewed on a monthly basis.
- The practitioners have established a positive and collaborative early years’ team. Relevant professional development strengthens practice and professional discussions are focused on reflective practices.
- The staff appraisal process includes a strong emphasis on practitioners’ self-reflection and building professional capacity.
- Parental involvement is highly valued in the setting. The practitioners communicate informally with parents and formal meetings are facilitated when necessary. The spirit of partnership is commendable.
- Children’s transitions from home to the playgroup are informed by detailed parental contributions. The starter pack shares concise information on the curriculum and key policies and procedures.
- Successful transitions from playgroup to primary school are planned and supported. Visits to a local school are facilitated and strengths-based information is shared with teachers.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The practitioners demonstrate and excellent capacity to implement the actions advised and continue delivering a high quality service for children.
### Summary of Overall Inspection

<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>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very good</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is very good is highly effective in meeting the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good</strong></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><strong>Fair</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is fair requires practice to be improved to meet the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is poor is inadequate and requires significant improvement to meet the needs of children.</td>
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*Published April 2019*