EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Cappoquin Community Childcare</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>Millstreet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cappoquin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>County Waterford</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>09WD0013</td>
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Date of Inspection: 27-03-2019
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** 27-03-2019

**Inspection activities undertaken**
- Meeting with setting manager
- Meeting with practitioners
- Observation of interactions during a number of sessions
- Interaction with children
- Review of relevant documents
- Feedback to setting manager and practitioners

**CONTEXT OF SETTING**

Cappoquin Community Childcare is a community-managed setting that has been in operation since 2007. It provides full day care, after-school care and sessional pre-school programmes for children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. Six early years practitioners and thirty-two children were present on the day of the inspection. 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.
- The practitioners create a very warm and welcoming atmosphere. Parents and extended family members appear very comfortable in the setting and the children confidently self-register on arrival.
- The practitioners foster positive relationships with the children and their families. Their interactions with the children are responsive and unhurried. Many fine examples of the practitioners instigating spontaneous natural conversations and one-on-one time with the children were observed.
- The practitioners successfully provide a consistent routine for the children. The children appear very familiar with the daily routine and they purposefully use the photographic visual to plan for and display the sequence of activities. The routine includes ample time for children to self-direct their own play and learning and to participate in adult-directed activities.
- Transitions between activities are managed very well. The children receive clear verbal signals of impending changes and timers are utilised effectively to let children know how long they have before they move to the next activity.
- Children’s developing sense of identity and belonging is supported successfully by the practitioners. There are numerous photographic displays of the group learning experiences, children’s individual art work and their families in the pre-school rooms and the welcome areas. Many examples of children participating in conversations with the practitioners about community events and their lived experiences outside of the setting were observed during the inspection.
- The setting has made positive connections with the local community. The children have regular access to the adjoining community park and they participate in many community events throughout the year.

**Actions advised**

- The practitioners are advised to introduce a key person approach across the setting. This approach is where each child has one assigned practitioner who takes time to get to know the child and his/her family. The practitioner also conducts observations and plans learning experiences. More information on this is available in the ‘Curriculum Foundations’ pillar in the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide.
- To further support children’s developing sense of identity and belonging and their awareness of the range of differing cultures, the practitioners are advised to create more photographic displays that depict community landmarks and the breadth of community and cultural events that involve the children and the setting.
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.
- There is a play-based curriculum implemented in the setting that is aligned to *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*.
- A thematic approach to curriculum planning is used. For example, seasonal events and thematic-based lesson plans guide the weekly, adult-directed activities and art projects. The setting is at an early stage in the development of an emergent, enquiry-based curriculum. While a number of the children’s interests and learning needs are noted in children’s learning journals, there is little evidence of how these inform the planning of activities and experiences and the materials available in the learning environment indoors and outdoors.
- A range of effective assessment approaches is used to gather information about the children’s learning experiences and achievements. The practitioners maintain observations and developmental checklists and the children’s learning journals include narratives, anecdotes and photographs. These journals are shared with families at the end of the year.
- The overall quality of the interactions between the practitioners and the children is commendable. A number of very good quality interactions were observed between the practitioners and children. In these instances, practitioners were responsive and warm in their interactions with the children, they were attentive to their cues, made valuable suggestions and asked questions to extend and sustain their play interests. The children clearly benefitted from these interactions.
- The indoor environments effectively support children to learn through play. The environments are prepared and organised into a variety of well-resourced learning areas. These include a reading area, messy play area, and areas for small world play, imaginative play and art.
- The outdoor area, while small, effectively supports children’s large motor development and their desire for exploration and social engagement. The practitioners articulate a clear understanding of the benefits of the outdoors for children. They access a nearby public park regularly; this provides children with further opportunities to explore and experience nature and to engage in fundamental movement skills, such as running, balancing skipping and climbing.
- The practitioners effectively support children’s emergent language, literacy and numeracy skills. They use mathematical language in play situations and they extend the children’s vocabulary. The practitioners provide children with a wide variety of writing materials and they regularly read stories and encourage children to sing songs and to recite nursery rhymes.

Actions advised

- To progress the development of an emergent, enquiry-based curriculum, the practitioners are advised to utilise the tip sheets and templates in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide*, especially those provided in the section ‘Planning and Assessing using Aistear’s Themes’. It is further advised that information gathered about children’s learning be used to inform planning in a more systematic and practical way so that the curriculum is more responsive to the children’s emergent interests and their learning dispositions.
- The practitioners are advised to provide increased opportunities for children to develop and express their creativity and individuality. In this regard, an additional focus on the promotion of open-ended creative art, music, movement and dramatic play, with less emphasis focus on template, product-focused art are advised.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is good.
- The children appear happy, confident and motivated. They clearly enjoy being together and they demonstrate a keen regard for each other.
- The children interact well with each other and reveal many positive learning dispositions, such as persevering with challenge and difficulty, making decisions, being absorbed and purposeful, and using their imagination.
The children are confident agents in their own learning during play time indoors. They initiate play, they follow through on their play themes and they co-operate during group games.

The majority of the children are good communicators. There are a number of children for whom English is not their predominant language. They are very eager to communicate and engage in conversations with practitioners and their peers. Time allocated for small-group discussion was limited in both sessions.

The majority of the children demonstrate a keen interest in writing, looking at books and decoding symbols. They enjoy story time, singing songs and reciting rhymes.

The children generally demonstrate the ability to self-regulate their behaviour and to understand the limits and boundaries in relation to using the materials and interacting with each other.

The children's group learning experiences and individual artwork are attractively displayed in the rooms and the welcome areas. Currently, the learning journals are not developed in collaboration with the children and they are not easily accessible to them.

The children demonstrate good gross motor and fine motor skills and a sense of wonder and awe in their engagement with the various learning environments.

**Actions advised**
- The practitioners are advised to provide the children with time each day for small-group discussions and learning activities. This will support their English language learning and general communication and thinking skills.
- The practitioners are advised to involve the children in creating their learning journals and to have them available and accessible to the children. In addition, the inclusion of children’s comments that capture their thoughts, ideas and feelings on the various learning experiences and their artwork is advised. These actions will enhance the children’s awareness of their changing abilities and their capacity to see themselves as successful learners.

**AREA 4**

**QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING**

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good
- The practitioners are supported effectively by the management team to engage in continuous reflection on their practice. A number of the self-evaluation templates and tools from the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* have been utilised successfully to progress quality actions for improvement.
- The management team is highly committed to the on-going improvement of practice and to the well-being and professional development of the staff. The practitioners are encouraged to attend training and events through the local county childcare committee. The setting has engaged with the Better Start Quality Development Service and is in the process of updating a number of its policies and procedures and upgrading the outdoor area.
- Clear structures are in place for the smooth organisation of learning experiences for the children. Monthly staff meetings are facilitated and individual team meetings happen regularly. The management provides regular support and supervision to all the staff and there is real sense of shared leadership in the rooms.
- The setting is committed to fostering open communication with children’s families. This happens informally on a daily basis and through the welcome displays and regular newsletters. Families and parents are invited to open days and outings and they participate in the local St Patrick’s Day Parade each year. The more regular and systematic sharing of information in relation to individual children’s achievements and their progression in learning is at an early stage of development.
- The setting has established strong links with the local community and the various groups that use the community centre. The practitioners regularly invite local heroes and community workers into the setting to share their skills and experiences with the children.
- Transitions are effectively organised. The majority of children attend the local primary school. The setting has established positive links with key personnel in the school and has developed a transition policy. The management articulates a strong desire to strengthen communication and the sharing of information as children transition from pre-school to the primary school setting.
**Actions advised**

- The practitioners are advised to develop a systematic approach to reviewing practice and provision using the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide*. These reviews should take account of the parents’ and children’s perspectives of the setting. It is advised that the outcomes of these reviews are documented and used to inform practice and provision in the setting.
- The management and practitioners are advised to share children’s individual learning achievements and progression in learning with parents on a more regular basis. This may include sending learning journals home during the year, with an option for parents to add comments and feedback on their child’s learning, and facilitating each child’s key person to have one-on-one meetings with parents. The ‘Partnership with Parents’ pillar of practice in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* provides further guidance in this area of practice.

**CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE**

The capacity of the setting to implement the actions advised above is very good.
### 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>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of processes to support children's learning and development</td>
<td>Good</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>Very Good</td>
</tr>
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### Language used in Early Years Education Inspection reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of children.</th>
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<tbody>
<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>
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