An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Early-Years Education-focused Inspection

REPORT

Rainbows Playgroup
09WX0081

Ballinapierce, Enniscorthy
Co Wexford

Date of inspection: 03 May 2016
CONTEXT OF SETTING

Rainbows Playgroup is a rural service which is located in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford. It is privately owned and has been in operation for twenty-five years. The service operates a morning session and caters for eleven pre-school children. On the day of the inspection 5 children were present, 3 of whom are participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. The setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised in this report, and the response submitted on behalf of the setting will be found in the appendix of this report.

AREA 1

QUALITY OF CONTEXT TO SUPPORT CHILDREN’S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The quality of the context to support children’s learning and development is very good.
- The atmosphere in the setting is very warm and welcoming. Practitioners spend time in conversation with parents and children at arrival and departure.
- The relationships between the practitioners and children and children with each other are encouraging and respectful.
- The practitioners provide guidance, encouragement and meaningful praise to children.
- Practitioners currently give advance verbal messages to signal changes in routines for children.
- The setting has developed strong links with the local community.

Actions advised
- Further opportunities for the promotion of diversity within the learning environment are advised, to include a greater focus on the recognition and celebration of the individuality of children.
- To support children’s experiences of transitions within activities and throughout the daily routine, the use of techniques such as visual cues, songs and poems is advised.

AREA 2

QUALITY OF PROCESSES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN’S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The quality of the processes to support children’s learning and development is good.
- The setting uses a thematic approach to planning with some evidence of Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework.
- Some information is gathered on children’s learning and a checklist progress report is created every two months.
- Practitioners know the children well and are good at responding to children’s needs.
- The room is well laid out, with clearly defined areas of interest. Children have regular access to outdoor play, including some trips to a local forest.
- A broad variety of play experiences, supported by a good range of resources, is accessible to children.
- Some effective examples of the promotion of children’s language development, including enabling children to make connections with prior learning, are evident.

Actions advised
- Practitioners are advised to use the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide to reflect on the children’s learning and to plan for their progress.
- A more consistent approach to the promotion of children’s emergent literacy and numeracy skills and the increased use of songs and poems is advised.
AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is good.
- Children are interested and show enjoyment in their learning. The practitioners offer lots of support and encouragement to ensure children experience success.
- Children confidently engage in individual, pair and group work.
- Some information about children’s experiences is gathered and shared with parents formally and informally.
- Children understand the rules of the setting and are learning to play co-operatively. They demonstrate awareness of how to behave appropriately in different situations.
- Some good interactions between the practitioners and children support children to listen and to take turns in conversations.
- During both indoor and outdoor activities, children demonstrate good physical skills, and good fine and gross motor skills.

Actions advised
- Practitioners are advised to develop consistent approaches to observation and assessment to support the planning and monitoring of progression in children’s learning and development.
- Further development of children’s independent learning dispositions is advised, to promote children’s reasoning and problem-solving skills.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.
- The setting has established strong relationships with parents and there are regular communication opportunities.
- An ethos of teamwork is evident in the setting. There is clarity around the roles and responsibilities of practitioners with regard to educational activities, with some development of leadership roles.
- The setting has made useful links with external support services and there is a focus on staff members engaging in continuing professional development.
- The setting has created links with local schools.
- A variety of techniques is used to support parents and children as they transition into the setting. These include regular visits by children to the setting in June before enrolment and allowing parents to stay for extended periods during settling-in time.

Actions advised
- Formal opportunities for practitioners to reflect on, review practice and to collaboratively plan for ongoing improvement are advised.
- Practitioners are advised to consider the use of a key worker system to support children’s interests and to extend the sharing of children’s learning and development with them and with their families.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The staff and management of Rainbows Playgroup are committed to developing and promoting their professional work and improving the service to meet the needs of children and families. Their capacity to implement the actions advised above is good.
## Summary of Overall Inspection Findings

<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>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<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>
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APPENDIX

SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to address the actions advised in the inspection report

- Following the inspection, the staff and management had a meeting and it was agreed by all that we would start to implement the suggested changes immediately.

- We took and exhibited more photographic evidence of the children at play. Some of these were put into learning stories, others helped to reinforce the theme of Identity and Belonging. They all created very good and meaningful talking points for children, parents, staff and indeed potential new parents visiting the setting. This recommendation was very easily implemented in our setting and has been very successful.

- We documented our ‘Helper of the Day’ rota, both visually and in written form.

- We downloaded the Aistear and Síolta Toolkit, and have used this in our planning meetings. Our aim is to continuously use this as a resource to aid the documented implementation of Aistear and Síolta.

- We displayed and used many more visual cues for literacy and numeracy on a daily basis.

- We now keep a printed copy of all progress reports/observations etc on each child.

- We formally developed and documented the key worker system.