

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Setting Name	Frances' Little Flowers
Setting Address	Beech Road Ballinahease Arklow County Wicklow
DCYA number	10WW0154

Date of Inspection: 08-05-2019



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agus Scileanna
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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	08-05-2019
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interaction with children• Review of relevant documents• Feedback to setting owner

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Frances' Little Flowers is a privately-owned setting based in County Wicklow. It provides a morning play-based learning programme. On the day of the inspection, the owner/sole practitioner and six children who are on their second year of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme were in attendance. The owner attended the post-inspection feedback meeting. The early years setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised of the report, and the response 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 the children's learning and development is very good.
- There is a warm, welcoming atmosphere in this setting. The practitioner shows an appreciation of, and interest in, the children and their families and demonstrates in-depth knowledge of each child.
- The daily routine is displayed and is flexible and responsive to the varying needs of the children throughout the session. Transitions between activities are signalled by the practitioner using a bell and a timer, and all children join in the singing of the tidy-up song.
- Snack time is promoted by the practitioner as quiet time and children are encouraged to be mannerly and to eat their food properly.
- The children have developed a close secure relationship with the practitioner. Praise and encouragement are regularly offered to the children throughout the session. The practitioner provides effective and consistent guidance to support positive behaviour among children. This was evident as she encouraged children to play co-operatively and to be kind to their friends.
- Children's sense of identity and belonging is reflected in the photographs at the entrance to the setting and on their coat hooks.
- To support children for whom English is as an additional language, the practitioner asks their parents to share simple everyday words. The practitioner then uses these words when communicating with the children. A parent has also visited and shared her cultural background by showing the children how to paint Easter eggs.
- Parents are provided with opportunities to visit the setting. They visit for the Christmas party, end-of-year graduation and the sports day and teddy bears picnic. A mini Arklow Music festival takes place every year and parents come to hear their children recite poems and sing songs.
- Children are developing an awareness of the local community. For example, they have had visits from a local yoga teacher and they go on walks to the local library and the fire station.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to promote snack time as a social occasion. This could be achieved by sitting with the children and chatting to them about their snacks and their lives outside of the pre-school.
- The practitioner is advised to broaden children's awareness of diversity, including differences in gender, culture and abilities. This can be achieved by displaying flags and different languages and extending the play resources and books.

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.
- In the room, there are displays illustrating the themes of *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. Planning is undertaken on an annual basis and divided into weekly topics based on seasonal themes. The planning is not underpinned by *Aistear* and the children's emergent interests have yet to be included.
- The practitioner compiles a scrapbook for each child with a selection of their art work. This is shared with parents at the end of the year.
- The practitioner undertakes observations of children's learning once a month using a template underpinned by *Aistear*. At the time of the inspection, these observations did not include the next steps planned for the children's learning.
- The practitioner sends a generic monthly newsletter to all parents. She adds personalised updates on individual children's engagement in activities for parents.
- The practitioner uses calm positive tones when interacting with the children. During the inspection, there were some missed opportunities to promote the children's thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Play is valued and promoted by the practitioner. The large indoor environment is well laid out in specific interest areas. A wide range of suitable, accessible resources is available to children.
- The large outdoor area is used on a daily basis by the children. They have access to a variety of different activities that help to promote their physical skills and a small cabin is used as a home corner. On the day of the inspection, it was too wet to go outside; the practitioner pushed back the chairs and tables and used the Bizzy Breaks physical activities to promote children's gross motor skills.
- The children's emergent literacy and numeracy are promoted through every day learning experiences, songs and rhymes, and the variety of games and puzzles available to children.
- Children with additional needs are well integrated into this setting. The practitioner has developed strong links with the relevant professional agencies and good communication channels with parents.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to develop a curriculum statement, linked to *Aistear*, that clearly documents the learning programme, including the dispositions, values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding that children will be supported to develop.
- The practitioner is advised to extend her current approaches to planning by developing a clear difference in themes and topics for children who will be attending for both years. As part of this process, the addition of the emerging interests of the children into the short-term plans is advised.
- The practitioner is advised to extend her observations of children's learning by recording the next steps for their progression.
- To build on the positive interactions, the practitioner is advised to consistently use a broader range of strategies, such as open-ended questions and prompts. These will promote the children's thinking skills and their abilities in discuss and share their thoughts and ideas.

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 enjoyment and engagement in their activities. Children achieve success in their learning and exhibit good concentration levels. For example, during the cutting activity one child announced 'Look I did it'.
- The children are learning to play co-operatively and some children display kindness and consideration to each other. A small number of children are still learning to follow the social rules of the setting and need the support of the practitioner to negotiate their minor disagreements.
- Children are given choice; they decide the songs they want to sing during the singing activity and select the book for story time.
- During the large group activities, such as story time and the musical movement, a small number of children became distracted and disengaged.
- The children are confident and eager to talk to the practitioner about their life outside the pre-school and discuss recent family events and their younger siblings during circle time.
- There are some examples of children's art work in the room. A large display of family photographs promotes children's identity and their connections with family life.
- Children are provided with opportunities to develop their self-help skills. A child helper routine is in place and children select the jobs they will do each day.
- The children are learning about the natural environment; they plant carrots, visit the hens in the outdoor area and feed the fish in the pond. Some children talked about the lambs on their grandad's farm.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to develop procedures, in consultation with the children, which will support the strengthening of their understanding and ability to play socially together and to independently resolve minor conflicts. These may then be displayed in pictures in the room.
- The practitioner is advised to review her approaches to catering for the varying needs of the children present. In so doing, the provision of different learning activities and experiences for younger children and for children present for a second year may be considered.
- To further support children's sense of identity and belonging, the practitioner is advised to include the voices of the children by adding their comments to their art work, and to include photographs of their engagement in activities as individuals and in groups to their scrapbooks.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
- The owner promotes high standards and fosters a clear vision for the provision of a quality learning experience. This is evident in her engagement with Early Childhood Ireland, the local childcare committee and a network of providers.
- The owner/practitioner engages in ongoing professional development and is currently taking part in the Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years (LINC) programme and a course on special educational needs. She has recently attended workshops on the *Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines* and Child Protection.
- To support the delivery of a quality learning experience, the owner has started to use of the self-evaluation tools in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide*.
- Information on the children's learning is shared informally with parents at arrival and collection times. The setting's policies and procedures are available to parents and social media and a notice board are used to inform parents of upcoming events.

- A number of very good approaches are used to support children's transition into and from the setting. Parents are encouraged to visit the setting with their child in advance of starting and an open day is held in August for all new children. A flexible system of reduced hours is available to support children to settle in at the start of the year and children are encouraged to bring transitional objects until they feel settled in their new environment.
- To support the children's move to primary school, a booklet on the school they will attend has been created for each child; this includes photographs of the school and the children's new teacher. Copies of these are available in the setting and on the day of the inspection children were observed looking at their booklets and talking about their new school with the owner and friends. Principals from the local schools have visited the setting and samples of the school uniforms are available to children.

Actions advised

- The owner is advised to create more formal opportunities for sharing children's learning and achievements with parents.
- The owner is advised to develop a parents' information booklet. This will support parents understanding of the setting's learning programme and how it is underpinned by *Aistear*.

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

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.

APPENDIX

SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

In Response to Area 1:

- Morning break is now promoted as an important time for socializing with friends and teacher.
- We have included a Culture Week into our curriculum plan to broaden the children's awareness of the world we live in. Parents of children who were born outside of Ireland are given the opportunity to teach up about their countries cultures etc.

In Response to Area 2:

- We now have a Curriculum statement on display on the main hall entrance.
- Planning now includes Year 1 and Year 2 in the playschool to show clearly what is expected of the children, short term plans are documented and emerging interests are taken into account also.
- To encourage positive interactions and thinking skills a notice is now on display to remind us of possible open ended questions to use in these situations.

In Response to Area 3:

- We plan to introduce new rules and new procedures on how we play and socialise, the children will be involved in making this happen.
- As they are all 3 this year (Sept 2019) I'll let them settle in first and look for their opinion in year 2.
- Toys are rotated each year, year 1 children have year 1 toys to choose from and year 2 children have more difficult and challenging toys to keep their interest alive.
- We now add the "children's voice" on the children's pictures going home or in their scrap book so the child's explanation is listened to and noted.
- Photos on display also include learning stories in action.

In Response to Area 4:

- To plan for the future and to introduce more formal opportunities for sharing children's learning with parents I will get feedback if they have an interest in attending parent-teacher meetings in the future.
- This September 2019 I made a parents handbook of all the necessary information parents need to know before their child started the school year.