<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Rainbow Childcare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>Whitehall Industrial Estate, Clonard, Co Wexford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>12WX0180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date of Inspection: 01-05-2018
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>00-00-0000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inspection activities undertaken</strong></td>
<td><strong>Observation of interactions during a number of sessions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with setting manager</td>
<td>Interaction with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with practitioners</td>
<td>Review of relevant documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with board of directors (including parent representatives on the board)</td>
<td>Feedback to setting manager and practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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**CONTEXT OF SETTING**

Rainbow Childcare was established in 2003 in the town of Clonard, on the outskirts of Wexford town. It is a privately owned, purpose build childcare facility. In 2013 ownership changed when the current owner took over the service. Full and part time early years and afterschool care is provided to children up to eleven years of age. On the day of inspection three practitioners and twenty-eight children were present in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) room. At the time of inspection, the service was undergoing a period of change as the curriculum model offered was being updated. 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 fair.
- There is a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere in the service. A multi-lingual welcome sign in the hallway greets everybody as they enter the setting. On arrival, parents and children are greeted in a friendly manner. An open-door policy is in operation and parents are encouraged to bring the children into the room and to say good bye when leaving.
- On the day of inspection there was no daily routine in place. Movement from one activity to another was prompted by the assistant manager who was covering in the room during the inspection. The duration of free play time provides ample time for the children to develop their ideas.
- The children were observed to manage their self-help and personal hygiene needs successfully. They used the toilet and washed their hands independently.
- Some strategies used during snack time provided the children with opportunities to further develop these skills. These activities included the children retrieving their own bags and tidying up after themselves. However, in general, snack time during the inspection was disorganised. The service provides some fresh fruit and a drink for each table. Not all children brought a snack and ate only a small piece of fruit.
- Some transitions were signalled by verbal and visual alerts and most children actively engaged in tidy-up time. On occasions during the inspection the children had unnecessary waiting periods between activities. For example, following tidy up time, the children were asked to sit and wait at a table until they were called to a group for the adult-led activities. The children were also observed lining up in an unnecessarily large group to wash their hands.
- Relationships within the setting are respectful and effective. Practitioners show positive regard for children and their families. There were many references made to the children’s family life in conversations between the practitioners and the children. Positive behaviour management, praise and encouragement are effectively used by practitioners during free play activities in order to promote children’s engagement in learning. The children’s relationships with each other are positive.
- Children’s identity and belonging are supported and nurtured. The children are represented in the setting through photographs. On the day of the inspection, photographs of a new child and the visitor were displayed on the door of the playroom. Practitioners seek support from parents around
key words when English is not a child’s first language. A world map is used to show where children come from.

- Several connections with the local community have been established. Children are brought on walks in the community. These walks include visits to the post office and fire station. Professionals such as paramedics and a photographer have come to visit. This year the photographer (a parent) took photographs of all the children.

**Actions advised**

- It is advised that a daily routine be established, documented and visually displayed at the children’s height. This will assist practitioners in planning the day efficiently and will also support the children’s understanding of and expectations within the daily routine.

- It is advised that meal times be used as an opportunity to further develop the children’s social, language and self-help skills. Practitioners need to sit with the children and encourage them to retrieve their snack, cup and plate within a reasonable time frame and to pour their own drink. This time can also be used to promote children’s healthy eating habits and to facilitate discussions and reflections. It is also advised that all children bring a light snack into the service for snack time or that individual portions of fruit be provided for children who do not have a snack.

- To ease children’s transitions throughout the day, it is advised that signals and alerts be used consistently to draw children’s attention to the end of an activity.

- To focus the children’s attention between activities and to reduce waiting periods, it is advised that adult-led activities be set up in advance. The use of books, stretch/movement activities or calming rhymes between activities with the whole group is advised, particularly during times when handwashing is carried out.

**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 fair.

- A new Montessori and emergent, play-based curriculum informed by *Aistear, The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* has recently been implemented.

- Curriculum planning is informed by long-term and medium-term plans, which are based around monthly themes. On the day of inspection, the children’s emergent interests, needs or cultures were not linked to planning and were not obvious in the adult-led activities. Short-term plans were not available.

- A range of assessment approaches and documentation are used to track the children’s learning and development. These include, children’s scrapbooks, photographs, individual learning stories, children’s work and Montessori checklists.

- Play is central to children’s learning and development. The practitioners sit with children during play activities. Regular feedback and praise are given to encourage children’s involvement in activities. Links to past learning or current experiences were not observed and opportunities to extend children’s thinking were missed through the practitioners’ use of closed questions.

- The practitioners model positive interactions between each other and encourage positive peer interactions between the children through the use of effective behaviour management strategies. The children are viewed as competent and capable learners and are encourage to be actively engaged in learning experiences. The room provides many opportunities for the children to engage in activities alone and together.

- The environment is well maintained, bright and airy. The pre-school room is divided into interest areas. Most areas are well resourced and effectively provide children with many opportunities to engage in a range of activities and with a range of materials. Resources and materials available were accessible to all children on the day of the inspection. It was observed that the book area was underutilised and the layout of the creative area and resources available restricted the children’s exploration and engagement with materials.

- The children have daily access to the outdoor area. On the day of inspection, equipment was minimal and did not support the children’s messy, pretend, construction or gross motor play. The available equipment included a play house, pram, trolley, some drive-on cars, scooters and balls. There were some raised flower beds and a bench area for sitting.
• Children’s early literacy and numeracy skills are supported by the extensive array of books, Montessori and table-top equipment. Practitioners effectively provide children with opportunities to converse and listen. Links between numbers, colours and letters in everyday conversations are made by both the practitioners and children.

• Additional support is provided for children who require it. Support from AIM (Access and Inclusion Model) and links with other professionals have been established.

**Actions advised**

• To help embed an emergent curriculum in the service, the practitioners are advised to update observation and learning records to the newer version available in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide*. Information from these records should be used to develop short-term plans linked to individual interests or needs.

• To support children’s higher level of thinking and to make connections between past and present learning, it is advised that practitioners use more open-ended questions such as, ‘What?’ ‘Why?’ and ‘How?’

• The practitioners are advised to review the positioning and layout of the book and creative area to maximise access and use. Merging the book and library areas and creating a softer comfortable space for children to sit and read will encourage the children’s engagement with the books. Increasing the quantity of resources offered and adding water and open-ended materials to the creative area will support imaginative and sensory play and problem-solving skills.

• Provision of a well-designed and resourced outdoor space is needed in order to offer the children greater opportunities to develop sensory, physical and social skills, and to encourage the use of all senses and the growth of observation skills. With this in mind, it is advised that the practitioners consult the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide*. This will assist with the development of the outdoor area to include real, natural, recycled, sensory, and creative equipment which will enhance learning and development.

**AREA 3**

**QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

• The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is good.

• On the day of inspection the children presented as happy and confident. The majority of children had good levels of concentration and displayed a good understanding of rules and boundaries. A few children required assistance to manage their behaviour. Practitioners facilitated this appropriately using positive behaviour management techniques.

• Children were observed to be inquisitive and confident and they demonstrated the capacity to make decisions for themselves. They moved equipment from one area to another to facilitate play ideas. One child was observed using a magnifying glass to explore different items in the room.

• Many children have established a good sense of self. Various references to families and friends were heard. During the session, a child asked for her name to be written, and referred to another child with the same name but stated she had different colour hair. Another child pointed to his name and said, ‘That’s me, my name starts with a ‘C’.’ Children demonstrate the capabilities to actively engage in activities alone, in pairs or in groups. Many playful group-activities observed were led by the children themselves.

• The children demonstrate good communication, language and listening skills. They requested help when needed, followed instructions, and initiated conversations with their peers and adults in the room. During the inspection, children openly discussed activities they were involved in and happily showed finished work to the adults in the room.

• During the inspection it was observed that the children’s growing imagination stimulates the successful development of their emergent language, literacy and numeracy skills. For example, some individuals used sounds to mimic items in the environment such as cars when they were playing with toy cars. Emergent pre-writing skills such as small marks on the page became numbers and letters. Playdough became ice-cream. This lead to conversations between the children which included discussion about their favourite ice-cream. One child said she was eating mint ice-cream as she had green playdough.

• On the day of inspection, the adult-led group activities which included circle-time, painting, reading books and playing with jigsaws were held simultaneously. These activities progressed in an
unplanned manner: Materials for the painting activity were limited and the circle time group of children was too large. Children in the circle time group were distracted by the other activities happening in close proximity. This led to the practitioners spending a lot of time managing individual behaviour. Children having to raise their hand to answer a question in the circle-time group was unsuitable for this age and stage of development.

**Actions advised**

- As young children learn to master tasks through exploration and active play, it is advised that adult-led activities be planned and organised as part of the free-play session. This will allow children to make choices and finish activities at their own pace.
- To build on the children’s emergent social skills and to encourage children’s developing attention spans, it is advised that the children be organised into smaller groups for circle time.

**AREA 4**

**QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING**

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.
- Formal and informal staff meetings take place. At the time of inspection, no documented self-reviews had taken place even though the service was going through a period of change.
- A positive professional team approach was evident on the day of inspection. Monthly support and supervision are provided to all staff by the owner/manager. Links with local and national organisations for support, advice and training have been established. The owner/manager encourages practitioners to participate in training and provides information on forthcoming courses. Completed training includes training on the Action and Inclusion Model (AIM) and Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years (LINC) Programme. At the time of the inspection, no staff member had been involved in *Aistear* or *Síolta* training.
- The practitioner’s role modelling abilities and liaise with staff on a daily basis. All staff within the ECCE room during the inspection were observed to have opportunities to take the lead for different activities during the session. At the time of inspection, no keyworker system was in operation despite the large numbers of children attending.
- Transitions into the service are effective. An information pack is provided for all new parents. Information is gathered from parents about their child and this is documented in ‘All about me’ folders at the beginning of the year. Information is provided for parents about children’s learning and development at the end of the year. There is a settling-in policy which encourages parents to stay to help settle children for an initial period. During the inspection, a practitioner was observed to successfully encourage and support a parent to settle an upset child. Some links with the local primary school have been established. Classes from the primary school come to the service and perform a concert for the children. Children from the service attend the primary school for open days.

**Actions advised**

- It is advised that the *Aistear*, *Síolta Practice Guide* be used as a tool for self-reflection. The outcomes of these reflections should be documented. Training in *Síolta* and *Aistear* should be considered to help with the changeover to a new curriculum.
- It is advised that procedures be developed to offer the parents a more formal structure to share and receive information on their children’s learning and development.
- It is advised that a key worker system be developed to allow the children build secure relationships with one adult, to support planning, and to link with parents. The key worker role could also extend to snack and story time where key workers and their group of children spend time together.
CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

This service is currently in a period of transition however the capacity of the service to implement the actions advised above is very good.
### Summary of Overall Inspection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quality Level</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of context to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of processes to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Fair</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>
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</tbody>
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### Language used in Early-Years Education-focused Inspection reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</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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