Early-Years Education-focused Inspection

REPORT

Bláth Beag Creche and Afterschool
13GY0349

21 Abhainn Na Rí, Oranmore
Co. Galway
CONTEXT OF SETTING

Bláth Beag Crèche and Afterschool is located in Oranmore, Co Galway. It is a part of a privately-owned crèche chain that offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. On the day of inspection there were 16 children and 2 staff present in the ECCE room inspected. The setting was given the opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised in this report; the service chose to accept the report without a response.

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.
- Relationships and engagement between practitioners and children and also with their parents are very respectful, affirming and warm.
- Children are facilitated to be active learners and are supported to take responsibility for their personal care needs.
- There is a balanced daily routine that provides for meaningful learning and development activities.
- Children would benefit from a visual representation of the routine to promote each child’s emotional security.
- Encouragement and acknowledgement of children’s efforts and achievements by practitioners is evident.
- Practitioners model positive behaviour management strategies and children are encouraged to use those strategies.

Action advised

- Practitioners are advised to develop a visual schedule to support each child to predict the sequence of the daily routine particularly for children with language or comprehension challenges.

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 service has recently moved to an emergent curriculum focusing more on play-based learning. The curriculum is informed by Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework, as evidenced in the children’s learning journals and long, medium and short term planning folder.
- The children would benefit from engaging with a curriculum which includes additional mathematical and literacy activities using open-ended resources.
- Children’s achievements and strengths are noted, including practitioners’ reflections for future learning possibilities, and these inform the next steps of each child’s learning and development.
- Practitioners are skilled in scaffolding children in their learning and extend their thinking through engaging interactions during child-initiated activities.
- Currently the adult-initiated learning activities present less opportunities for children to be engaged in discussion that extends learning.
- The inviting and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment offer a wide range of experiences that develop children’s creativity, imagination and desire for exploration. Children have choice to move between both areas. It is commendable that the service has provided all-weather clothes.
Actions advised
• Building on the good play-based learning provided, it is advised that practitioners use play and real-life experiences to support children's understanding of mathematical and literacy concepts.
• It is advised that practitioners use a range of interaction strategies during adult-initiated activities that support children to express their views, opinions and reflect on their own learning.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS
• The quality of children’s learning experiences and achievements is good.
• Children are confidently and competently learning and developing in an enjoyable, motivated and meaningful way.
• Some children use the accessible learning journals to reflect and talk about their learning experiences. All children could be encouraged to regularly discuss or share aspects of their learning achievements with others.
• Children are inquisitive and use their natural curiosity to experiment, investigate and problem solve individually and cooperatively.
• Many examples of well-coordinated fine and gross motor skills are evident among the children.
• Children explore sound using the sound wall outdoors and musical instruments.

Actions advised
• It is advised that practitioners seek ways to provide additional opportunities for children to experience pattern, rhythm and repetition in language through singing songs and moving to music.
• Encouraging and supporting opportunities for all children to discuss and reflect on their learning achievements, is advised.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING
• The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
• A strong ethos of teamwork is evident. Staff are valued, supported and encouraged in their individual roles and responsibilities.
• The setting shares information about the curriculum and on children’s learning and achievements with parents. The innovative hallway displays visually represent the child-centred, play-based philosophy within the service.
• Staff engage in regular review of curriculum where changes reflect children’s experiences within the service and how best to support learning and development.
• Engagement with the local schools to support transitions is a recent development. The continued development of communication with local schools is beneficial for children and families during transition from the setting.

Action advised
• It is advised that practitioners develop a plan to prepare and support children in relation to transition to primary school. This should involve parents and local schools where possible, to ensure continuity and progression in children’s learning.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE
The staff and management of Bláth Beag Crèche and Afterschool demonstrate a very good capacity to implement the actions advised in this report.
### Summary of Overall Inspection Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quality Level</th>
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</thead>
<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>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Level</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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