EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Kealkil Childcare</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>Droumlickarse</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kealkil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bantry</td>
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<td></td>
<td>County Cork</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>15CC0508</td>
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Date of Inspection: 21-03-2019
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(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

Date of inspection | 21/03/2019
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Inspection activities undertaken

- Meeting with setting manager
- Meeting with practitioners
- Observation of interactions during two sessions
- Review of relevant documents
- Feedback to setting manager

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Kealkil Childcare is a privately owned setting providing full-time day-care and sessional pre-school education. The facility was established in 2015 and is located in a rural setting in the outskirts of Kealkil village. There are two pre-school rooms which cater for children who are participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. The inspection took place in both pre-school rooms. Two practitioners and twenty 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 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.
- There is a notably warm and welcoming atmosphere in Kealkil Childcare. Parents are relaxed and comfortable coming into the classroom and conversing with the practitioners at arrival and home times.
- A routine has been established that provides many short spurts of active free play, art and craft small group activities, outside time, circle time and snack time. There is a visual daily routine in both pre-school rooms hung at adult height.
- Transitions from one activity to the next over the course of the day are sometimes signposted verbally. At times during the inspection, some children were not aware of the change in activity and would have benefited from additional supports.
- Snack time is a social occasion where children participate in handing out place mats and lunch boxes. The practitioners take the time to sit and engage in conversations with the children.
- The children’s developing sense of identity and belonging is very effectively nurtured through the use of the children’s photographs, family wall and the allocation of personal coat hooks. On the day of the inspection children in one preschool room were creating a friendships display, discussing what they admired about their peers. This is highly effective in fostering their sense of identity.
- Recognition, praise and encouragement are regularly offered by practitioners towards children’s positive behaviour. For example, practitioners use calm and respectful tones and affirm the children for helping as they clean up after snack time.
- There are many opportunities during the year to bring children and families together and for the children to gain a better understanding of the local community. Parents and visitors from the community are invited to share knowledge and experiences. A local nurse and fireman have been some of the recent visitors.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to review the daily routine to ensure that a minimum of one hour of active free play is provided for children. A larger display of the visual daily routine needs to be provided, featuring photographs of children engaging in the different elements of the daily routine. It needs to be hung at child height.
- It is advised that practitioners review and reorganise their strategies to support children during times of transitions in the daily routine. Auditory and/or visual tools could be used to inform and prepare the children for the upcoming change. The newly developed visual daily routine could be one such support.
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.
- A broad play-based curriculum that encompasses the principles of *Aistear; the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* is established in the setting.
- Practitioners demonstrate a clear understanding of the importance of a play-dominated curriculum in fostering the children’s independence and creativity. The current short-term planning process is thematic with practitioners yet to embrace the inclusion of children’s emergent interests.
- The setting is at an early stage of developing its assessment approaches. The approaches include checklists and progress reports. Some anecdotal written observations and comments on children’s art work feature but this is not common practice in the setting.
- The indoor environments are structured into clearly defined spaces and provide for multi-sensory learning experiences for the children. Both spaces are well maintained and provide for imaginative play, construction play and sensory learning experiences.
- The children are provided with daily opportunities to engage in the outdoor learning environment. They have access to waterproof clothing; this ensures that they can use the outdoor environment regardless of the weather. The environment provides opportunities for children to develop their physical and gross motor skills.
- Both practitioners facilitate effective quality interactions with children. There is a balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated activities and children are supported and encouraged to learn independently, in pairs and in small groups.

**Actions advised**

- Practitioners are advised to introduce a short-term planning method that incorporates the children’s emerging interests. Resources available in the ‘Planning and Assessing’ pillar of the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* would support this development.
- The practitioners are advised to further develop assessment practices to provide a more regular and fulsome analysis of children’s learning, of their interests and stages of development. The practitioners need to consider how these observations can be used to guide the next steps in the children’s learning.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is very good.
- Support for children’s well-being is clearly evident. Children are kind and sensitive to one another with some strong friendships observed.
- Children present as confident and capable learners and enjoy participating in activities. They are very secure in the learning environment and assume their role in organising and choosing their play with great assurance.
- Children demonstrate enjoyment in creative activities such as mark-making, and free painting. During the inspection, it was noted that a high volume of work sheets and colouring pages were on display in the environment. The use of these resources is not fully in line with the children’s needs.
- The children show a growing capacity to make healthy choices around nutrition, exercise and general well-being. Many opportunities are provided for movement both indoors and outdoors.
- The children are very effective communicators who display strong social skills. They are articulate in how they express themselves. The children are working intentionally alone, in pairs and in small self-selected groups.
- Children are inquisitive and developing confidence in exploring and thinking about their learning experiences. There is scope to develop their awareness of their changing and developing abilities and successes.
• Many children are developing very good early mathematical knowledge. On the day of the inspection, a group of children playing in the construction area discussed the different heights featured in their built structure; they counted the number of blocks in the ‘highest tower’ and in the ‘smallest one’.

*Actions advised*

• Practitioners are advised to provide the children with increased opportunities for choosing and engaging in open-ended process art and free mark-making experiences, as distinct from template art activities and worksheets.

• The practitioners are advised to introduce opportunities for children to reflect on their past learning experiences. Providing children with access to their learning journals would be a welcome starting point. These journals need to be accessible to the children so that they can self-review and reflect on their learning.

**AREA 4**

**QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING**

• The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.

• The owner/managers demonstrate a very clear understanding of the focus and ethos of the setting. Efforts have been to share this with all stakeholders.

• A number of appropriate policies and procedures have been developed and are available for the staff to inform and guide their practice.

• Practitioners engage in professional development events to improve and enhance practice and provision. They have attended the workshops on ‘Diversity and Equality’ and the ‘Healthy Ireland Programme’ facilitated by the local Childcare Committee and have used this learning purposefully.

• The owner/manager demonstrates a clear understanding of the importance of review and reflection. The practitioners are taking steps to focus their efforts on systematically monitoring the quality of provision for education and learning.

• The practitioners provide parents with appropriate formal and informal opportunities to be informed about the setting and their child’s progress. Parents have attended information evenings in the setting, and a detailed parental handbook and regular questionnaires are used to support the setting to identify areas for improvement.

• The setting has introduced strategies to support children in their transition from the setting to primary school. These include the use of a story timeline, social stories and photographs of the junior infant teacher.

*Action advised*

• To ensure continued quality development, it is advised that the practitioner begin to use the online resource, *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* to guide structured self-evaluation and self-reflection of their practice.

**CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE**

The capacity of the setting to implement the actions advised above is 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>Very 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-focused Inspection reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</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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