EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Yellow House Montessori</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>North Street</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skibbereen</td>
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<td></td>
<td>County Cork</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>16CC0557</td>
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Date of Inspection: 24-05-2019
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.
Date of inspection: 24/05/2019

Inspection activities undertaken:
- Meeting with setting manager
- Meeting with practitioner
- Observation of interactions during one session
- Review of relevant documents
- Feedback to setting manager and practitioners

**CONTEXT OF SETTING**

Yellow House Montessori is a private setting which was established in 2009. It is located in a private dwelling in Skibbereen town. The owner of the setting operates a second setting a few doors up the street, and the practitioners work collaboratively across the two settings. The setting provides a morning pre-school programme for children enrolled on the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. The evaluation was conducted during the morning pre-school session. The owner/manager, twenty children, one practitioner and one access and inclusion model (AIM) practitioner were present. 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 excellent.
- There is a noticeably warm and welcoming atmosphere in the setting. Children and parents receive an extremely inviting welcome at the beginning of the session.
- The daily routine is well established and responsive to the children’s individual needs. It offers extended periods of free play, active outdoor play and large group time.
- The setting operates a rolling, self-selected snack time. The table is pleasant and well prepared. The children choose when they wish to eat, they gather five at a time, collect their lunch and eat together. Practitioners sit with children and engage in social discussion about what play they had explored that morning.
- Relationships between the practitioners and the children are commendably warm and reciprocal. The practitioners interact with each child gently, positively and bring a sense of enjoyment to the session.
- Children are provided with a considerable amount of agency, choice and freedom in choosing and organising their learning and development activities. They move freely between the various interest areas, exercising independence through their engagement in the environment.
- Children are supported to learn about the local environment. Commendable connections have been made with the local community. For example, on the day of the inspection children participated in a pyjama day fundraiser for a past attendee of the setting.
- Children are learning in an extremely inclusive environment. The practitioners work in a consistent manner to support children who speak English is an additional language and children with additional needs. Children learn in a positive manner about their differences and how small thoughtful gestures can support others and make them more comfortable.

**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 excellent.
- The play-based, emergent curriculum in operation is informed by *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. Planning for the children’s learning and development is organised on long, medium and short term bases and responds to children’s emergent interests, learning needs and motivations.
• A comprehensive system for recording and assessing the children’s learning and development is in place. Practitioners use a variety of methods, including samples of the children’s work, ongoing and monthly observations and photographs.
• Play is the main medium for learning. The children are given extensive and well organised time to pursue their interests and to develop new skills and concepts alone, in pairs and in small groups.
• The indoor environment is laid out in a highly commendable manner with defined interest areas and a range of resources.
• Exemplary efforts have been made to provide an outdoor environment that is structured and organised to develop children’s curiosity, imagination and desire for exploration.
• Children demonstrate strong physical skills and coordination. This was apparent as they climbed the steps of the slide, balanced on blocks and chased one another in and around play equipment outside.
• The practitioners use very effective interaction strategies to support the children’s play, learning and development. These strategies include, engaging as play partners with the children, following their motivations and intentions, adding new vocabulary and challenging them to think in different ways about their play.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS
• The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is excellent.
• The children have access to a wide range of mark-making materials and they enjoy process art exploration, particularly at the large easel. Children use their imagination and creativity to explore various projects and experiments.
• There is a variety of languages spoken in the pre-school room and the children have many opportunities to develop their language skills. The children expressed delight and enjoyment during the practitioner-facilitated songs and rhymes times outside.
• The children have opportunities for rich and active learning and exploration, particularly in the well-organised indoor learning environment. In this environment, the design of the space and the resources available ensure that the children have opportunities to make choices and decisions about how they engage in play.
• Some children displayed dispositions of persistence and determination in their explorative play. An example was observed in the construction area where two children tried, and tried again to piece a track together. Once achieved they celebrated and shared their success with a practitioner.
• The children experience a sense of success through their engagement with resources, when they review their learning journals, and through their interactions and conversations with practitioners.
• The children demonstrate an excellent capacity to care for the environment; they enthusiastically tidy away their activities, they place chairs carefully back in position and they tidy up after their own snack time without being prompted.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING
• The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
• The owner/practitioner provides a clear direction for the work of the setting and demonstrates effective shared leadership. The practitioners work together in a very positive manner. Roles and responsibilities are clear and are shared equitably. Practitioners took leadership roles at different times during the sessions observed.
• The setting has made some links with the local primary schools. Currently information about the children’s learning experiences is not shared with the local schools; there is potential to develop strategies in this regard as a means of supporting continuity in their learning experiences.
• Information about children’s progression in learning and development is effectively shared with parents through informal conversations and displays. An online application is also used; through this, the parents can comment on their child’s learning and can reflect on this learning with the child at home.
There is an excellent range of communication channels established with parents including a parent handbook, daily informal meetings and various events throughout the year. The parents are involved and updated on curriculum and procedural changes throughout the year.

*Action advised*

- To support the children’s transition to school, the setting is advised to explore strategies to support it to share information about the children’s learning and development with the teachers in the local primary schools.
### 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>Excellent</td>
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<td>Quality of children’s learning experiences and achievements</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Very good</td>
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### Language used in Early-Years Education Inspection reports

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<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>
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<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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