EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Muin Pre-school</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>Muin Education Ltd.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Greenrooms</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brocklesby Street</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Blackpool</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cork City</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>16CY0149</td>
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Date of Inspection: 22-05-2019
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.
Early Years Education Inspection

Date of inspection
22-05-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection activities undertaken</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with setting manager</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting with practitioners</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Observation of interactions during a number of sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction with children</td>
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<td>Review of relevant documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback to setting manager and practitioners</td>
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**CONTEXT OF SETTING**

Muin Pre-school is a privately owned, urban early years centre. Four practitioners provide early years education to twenty children during a morning Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) session. Two practitioners are employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). All the practitioners and the owner of the setting 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.
- The ethos of the setting is caring and the atmosphere is warm and affirming. The practitioners are very friendly and welcoming and show a positive regard for the children and their families.
- The daily routine consists of too many transitions. The adult-initiated/led activity times outweigh the child-initiated/led free play times. This results in physically inactive times, where the children are required to sit and concentrate on tasks. As these times are too long, the children lose interest and become restless.
- A lovely, relaxed, family-type mealtime is created, with all the children and practitioners sitting together in small groups, eating and chatting. Snack time is also used to establish good habits for life and to promote well-being and a healthy lifestyle.
- The children engage very well in tidying up the environment. Transition times are announced ahead of time. During transitions, the children experience long, inactive waiting times. The children are very well supported and encouraged to become confident and independent in organising and managing their self-help and self-care needs.
- Relationships are respectful and responsive. In some instances, some very good meaningful guidance, such as recognition, affirmative feedback and clear instructions about positive behaviour are given.
- Some lovely opportunities, such as a family tree, self-portraits and photos above coat-hooks are provided for the children to develop an appreciation of themselves as individuals and as members of groups. Family and community members visit the setting to share their interests and expertise with the children.

**Actions advised**

- A slight change to the daily routine is advised. Long periods of uninterrupted, child-initiated/led free play times, indoors and outside, interspersed by short adult-initiated/led activities, such as ring-time and story time need to be established. Arts and craft activities and experiments could be optional and offered parallel to free play. The daily routine plan needs to be displayed in picture sequence for the children to follow.
- The practitioners are advised to manage transition times more effectively to promote continuity in learning throughout the day. They need to be fluid, so that long, inactive waiting times are avoided. To keep the children active, one practitioner could stay with the children, and use songs, rhymes, and games, or part of the group could be taken outside or to the hall.
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-based curriculum, informed by and linked to *Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* is documented and implemented. The practitioners are knowledgeable and skilled in the development and implementation of an emergent curriculum. Planning for children’s learning and development builds on the interests, previous experiences and learning dispositions of the children. Planning is not currently displayed for parents to view.
- A variety of assessment approaches is used to gather information about the children’s learning experiences and achievements. These include developmental checklists, short narratives about emerging interests and strengths and the next steps in learning, a transition flower, learning stories and an art collection folder for each child.
- Some good, high-quality interactions, where practitioners engage and motivate the child in their learning and development in a very respectful and caring way are evident. There is more scope to develop this good practice further across the staff team.
- Two long, narrow rooms with an open door between them make up the indoor group room. The indoor environment is very open-plan; this is not conducive to in-depth, interactive play in small groups. It is well resourced to inspire exploratory, creative play. A hall and a small strip of outdoor space at the side of the building are also available. These are used on a daily basis depending on the weather.
- Play is recognised and utilised as an important medium through which the children learn and develop.
- The children’s emerging language, literacy and numeracy skills are fostered well through the rich variety of freely available mark-making opportunities, through the use of songs and rhymes during circle time and through the interactive exploration of stories.
- The group of children is very diverse in their cultures, languages and abilities. For half the children in the group, English is an additional language; these children would benefit from more targeted support. Throughout the free play time, at tidy-up time and again at lunch time, music was being played in the background, sometimes at quite a high volume. This can detract the children’s attention away from the language which is being used incidentally, and from the language-focused activities.

*Actions advised*

- Practitioners are advised to streamline the assessment methods in use, and to ensure that assessment practices are more time and work efficient. The short-term curriculum plan is a work in progress and needs to be displayed for the parents.
- Practitioners are advised to explore and implement a range of appropriate interaction strategies, such as active listening, observing, prompting, and asking open-ended questions. They are advised also to utilise teach-able moments and learning opportunities and to co-construct knowledge with the children.
- The practitioners are advised to create designated, well-structured and well-resourced play areas, which invite and inspire interactive play in pairs and small groups. These could include a home-corner, a cosy library, and areas for construction, junk art and messy play. The outdoor environment needs to be included as an option during free play periods. It would be beneficial for practitioners to evaluate the play value of the environments, resources and materials. The environmental audit in the ‘Learning Environment’ pillar of the *Aistear, Siolta Practice Guide* is a useful tool in this regard.
- Practitioners are advised to implement a more purposeful approach to supporting the children who speak English as an additional language. There is a need to develop a very language-rich environment, where the spoken language is clear and supported where possible through prompts or actions. The use of songs, rhymes, finger-games and whole-body movement games throughout the day would greatly support language acquisition. The practitioners are encouraged to discontinue the use of background music so that the children can focus to a greater extent on listening to and speaking English, both incidentally and through the language-focused activities.
AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

• The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is good.
• Most of the children are actively involved in the activities for most of the time. A lot of individual or parallel play prevails. At the art table some lovely interactions develop and flourish.
• The children display some positive learning dispositions, such as initiative, resourcefulness, resilience and patience.
• The children are skilled at using a range of communication strategies, both verbal and non-verbal to communicate their feelings, ideas, thoughts and creativity. They express their uniqueness and individuality through free drawing, modelling, painting, making art and play.
• The children’s voices are visible, particularly in their learning folders, where their comments and ideas are documented on their art work and learning records.
• There are some opportunities for the children to make sense of the world around them and to develop their physical skills.

Actions advised
• Practitioners need to focus on creating more play opportunities which enable the children to engage in pairs and small groups; these will enable the children to develop and refine their personal and social skills and will support the use of language.
• The practitioners are advised to focus on creating more opportunities for the children to use their developing physical skills to manipulate and explore objects and diverse materials, particularly within the natural environment. There is a need also to provide daily opportunities for the children to develop their physical fitness, their gross motor skills, their core strength, their sense of balance and spatial awareness.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

• The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.
• Management and staff avail of some informal opportunities to reflect and to review practice. There are no regular team meetings or non-contact times for formal, co-operative reflection or planning.
• The stated philosophy and vision of the setting is evident in practice.
• On the day of the inspection, in some instances, the practitioner leading an activity left the activities to attend to other tasks. This left the children without guidance and valuable learning opportunities were missed.
• Clear two-way channels of communication between the setting and the families are established. These include ‘text-a-parent’, daily informal chats, a parental handbook, newsletters, parent-practitioner meetings at request and sharing information via electronic devices.
• Transitions into and from the setting are managed very effectively. Open-days and settling-in days are offered at the end of the summer holidays. Settling-in procedures are gradual and family friendly. The transition flower is used to share information with schools and some principals come to visit the children in the setting.

Actions advised
• Effective strategies for professional reflection individually and as a team need to be established. The outcomes of meetings need to be documented, so they can be shared, acted upon and reviewed.
• The setting is advised to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of each practitioner with regard to educational activities are clearly outlined.
### 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>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>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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APPENDIX

SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT
SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

Area 1  Observations on the content of the inspection report.

The sub sections were divides well. They were explained well and it was noted that there were great interactions etc. The points made about the roles and designation of roles was much clearer. Due to staff issues, the team of four had only worked together the previous day. Also, it was noted about routine and transition, we now use visual aids to assist this. We don’t use music most of the time now to promote language development and utilise action songs. On the given day we didn’t utilise the hall which is used daily for music and dance to build gross motor skills.

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