

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Setting Name	Startbright Greenhills
Setting Address	Bancroft Avenue Greenhills Road Dublin 24 D24 K248
DCYA number	16DS0387

Date of Inspection: 15-01-2020



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agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

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 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	15-01-2020
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interaction with children• Review of relevant documents• Feedback meeting with the operations' general manager, quality co-ordinator and room lead practitioners

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Start Bright Early Learning Centre, is one of five community-based settings managed by the same board of management. The setting was established in 2016 and is located in the grounds of St. Mary's National School, Greenhill's Road, Tallaght. The setting provides full day care, before school, after-school and sessional programmes for children, many of whom participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme. On the day of the inspection, six practitioners, two of whom are employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), and thirty-four children were present. The quality co-ordinator actively supports the practitioners in their roles and was a visible presence in both of the pre-school rooms. 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.
- A caring and friendly atmosphere is evident. On arrival, parents and children are greeted by staff in a friendly and relaxed manner. During this time, parents and practitioners engaged in many conversations and shared information.
- Relationships between the practitioners, the children and their parents are respectful and kind. The practitioners are attentive to the children's individual needs. A key person approach is in place. Each key practitioner has responsibility for observing and documenting children's learning.
- The flexible daily routine is visually displayed for the children. It includes time for the children to engage in a range of activities, such as free play, outdoor play and circle time.
- The practitioners provide ample opportunities and time for the children to actively choose and engage in their self-chosen and self-directed activities.
- All children adapt easily during transitions between activities. The practitioners use lights, verbal announcements and a timer to indicate that tidy-up time will begin soon.
- A noteworthy feature of the daily activities is the highly effective 'Rolling Snack Time'. This activity allows for children to choose when to eat. The table is set with a flower to indicate that snack time has begun and a staff member joins children when they decide to sit and eat their snack.
- The practitioners appropriately praise, encourage and comment on the children's involvement in activities.
- The practitioners' recognition of the individuality of each child is evident in the displays of the children's creative and mark-making work, the photographs, family walls and birthday charts. Children are also encouraged to use their photographs to sign themselves into the room each morning.
- The practitioners successfully provide opportunities for the involvement of families and the promotion of diversity in the setting. Parents are invited to annual events such as Christmas and Halloween activities, annual trips, and parents stay and play sessions.
- The practitioners have established good links with the community. The practitioners bring the children on walks to the Local Park and library, and the children engage in activities, such as drawing pictures, for the community wall. The lollipop lady, also visits from time-to-time.

Action advised

- To further support the children's awareness of the people and places in the local community, the practitioners are advised to invite professionals, including parents, to share their expertise, skills and knowledge with the children.

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 very good.
- The setting's emergent, play-based curriculum is informed by *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. The management team and the practitioners are in the process of developing their approaches to the implementation of an emergent curriculum. It is very evident that they are deeply committed to developing their practice to ensure that high quality standards are embedded in practice.
- The practitioners engage in long-term, medium-term and short-term planning. Medium-term plans are based on seasonal events and short-term plans are informed by the children's interests. Plans are flexible and children's emergent interests are incorporated into the daily activities.
- Regular observations, a checklist, group learning journals and individual scrapbooks are used to gather information on the children's learning. Learning journals and scrapbooks also document the children's learning and include photographs and samples of children's work. A record of the planned next steps in children's learning is not kept and individual learning plans for children with additional needs were not available on the day of inspection.
- The quality of adult/child interactions is highly effective. The practitioners sit with the children at their physical level; they share ideas and offer support as needed. They spontaneously follow the children's interests and engage in many sustained, shared thinking conversations. The adult-led activity 'fish portraits' was offered as a free-choice activity during free play.
- The practitioners view play as central to children's learning and regard them as competent and capable learners. They provide them with opportunities to engage in activities at a pace that is suitable to their ages and stages of development. The practitioners use strategies, such as inviting children to play, to encourage children to engage in activities with their peers.
- The learning environments are divided into well-resourced, interest areas. These include construction, home, creative, sensory, table-top and book/quiet areas. The children have daily access to an outdoor area where they have opportunities to engage in a range of gross motor, sensory and pretend play activities.
- The practitioners foster the children's early literacy skills through the print-rich environment and by providing the children with access to books and mark-making equipment in the indoor and outdoor areas. They also effectively use songs and rhymes throughout the day. During the inspection, not all children had an opportunity to engage in an adult-led, story-time activity.
- The practitioners adopt an inclusive approach to promoting all children's participation in the learning activities. This includes linking with parents and external agencies, providing one-to-one support when required, and availing of support under AIM. The practitioners are also participated in the Demonstration Project on In-school and Early Years Therapy Support.

Actions advised

- To further support the children's learning and development, the practitioners are advised to regularly record the planned next steps in learning for individual children and to make obvious the link between these records and the short term plan. In addition, the practitioners are advised to complete an individual learning plan for each child with additional needs.
- To further enhance the children's early literacy skills, the practitioners are advised to ensure that all children have an opportunity to engage in an adult-led, story-time activity each day.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is very good.
- The children present as happy and content. Their positive sense of well-being is evident in their interactions with their peers; they play co-operatively in pairs and small groups and may also choose to play on their own.
- The children exhibit high levels of motivation, engagement and independence in their learning; they actively initiate and participate in activities of interest to them.
- Many children demonstrate persistence and the ability to direct their own learning. This was evident in their noteworthy concentration levels. For example, a group of children spent a prolonged period of time at the craft table designing and creating, and a child rewound a ribbon that had unravelled from the reel with great precision.
- During the inspection, there were many examples of the children's highly effective communication and listening skills. They freely shared information on their achievements with others and asked and answered questions in context. The children express themselves through role play, and art and mark-making activities. Opportunities for the children to reflect on and share their learning experiences as a group were limited.
- Most children displayed highly effective fine and gross motor skills as they engaged in a broad range of activities. For example, they constructed buildings with magnetic shapes, used scissors with accuracy and manipulated an obstacle climbing course.
- The children demonstrate an emerging sense of their own identity and an awareness of others. Many children confidentially introduced themselves and some made reference to family members and were happy to discuss their photographs on display. Representation of the many different cultures of the children attending the setting was not highly visible.
- The children's social skills and their friendships with their peers are developing. Their ability to turn take, to share and to help others is also emerging. For example, when a child was sweeping up some clay, another child approached with a sweeping brush and stated 'I'll help you sweep up'.
- The extended opportunities for the children to engage in free play were instrumental in supporting the development of their exploration skills and their understanding of the world around them. For example, the children engaged in planning activities. They discussed beans growing into trees and were very interested in a snail they found in the garden.

Actions advised

- To support the children's understanding and awareness of their cultural identities, the practitioners are advised to make their home cultures more visible in the environment. To this end, additional use of word displays, books and play resources will be beneficial.
- The practitioners are advised to provide the children with regular opportunities to reflect on learning with others and to engage in the creation of their individual scrapbooks

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
- A professional atmosphere is evident. The practitioners reflect on, plan and discuss programme development, issues and concerns during regular whole-staff meetings and room planning meetings. There are also opportunities for room leaders to meet with the management team. In addition, the managers of the five settings meet with the senior management team.
- The team regularly consults the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* to review and develop their curriculum approaches and to support practice.

- The management team has established many links with other agencies to support their professional journey. These include, the local childcare committee, Early Childhood Ireland, networks, colleges and private enterprise. The management team has received support through the Better Start Mentoring programme and has implemented many of the practices advised into the setting's learning programme.
- The management team has been proactive in implementing initiatives to support quality practice and to ensure the smooth running of the setting.
- The practitioners are encouraged to participate regularly in continuing professional development with the setting's in-house training and with other professional bodies. Staff has availed of training in the Leadership for Inclusion (LINC) in Early Years programme, AIM, and on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion.
- Roles and responsibilities of practitioners are clearly defined and there is a clear vision for the direction of the work of the setting. A strategic plan has been developed which sets out objectives for the next five years.
- The management team shares policies and procedures with parents through a parents' handbook and a curriculum handbook. Regular informal chats and noticeboards are used to share information with parents. There is scope to develop communication with parents with regards to sharing and receiving information on children's learning and development.
- An effective settling-in policy supports the children's transition into the setting. Parents attend for an introduction meeting. A phased, settling-in approach is adopted and parents are encouraged to stay and support their child during the settling-in process. There are plans in place to further develop the parent/practitioner links.
- The practitioners prepare the children for the move to primary school through their planned activities. Links with the local primary school have been established. The children use the school for large events and information on the children's learning and development is verbally shared with the principal, with parents' consent.

Action advised

- To further support the children's transfer from pre-school to primary school, the practitioners are advised to review their transition policy and to use the '*Mo Scéal*' resources provided by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

Summary of Overall Inspection

Area	Quality Level
Quality of context to support children's learning and development	Very Good
Quality of processes to support children's learning and development	Very Good
Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership for learning	Very Good

Language used in Early-Years Education Inspection reports

Excellent	Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of children.
Very good	Provision that is very good is highly effective in meeting the needs of children.
Good	Provision that is good is effective in meeting the needs of children but with some aspects to be developed.
Fair	Provision that is fair requires practice to be improved to meet the needs of children.
Poor	Provision that is poor is inadequate and requires significant improvement to meet the needs of children.

APPENDIX

SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

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

Area 1

- Since our inspection we invited the local gym instructors to talk to the children as a part of our Community involvement. We have made connections with the local Garda and Fire station, Doctor and Dental surgeries to invite local professionals into the service in addition to us getting the children out and about in the community. We will increase and actively promote our play and stay activities and parent/teacher meetings and use this as a platform encourage parents to showcase their expertise and life skills with staff and children.

Area 2

- Through our interactions with our AIM co-ordinator we have organised to meet with staff to implement and train staff in completing the AIM access and Inclusion plan for children with additional needs. This will become an essential part of the AIM plan going forward for individual children.

Area 3

- We have identified the need to be more culturally aware and have put procedures in place to ensure the “All about Me” information returned in the child registration packs is read in advance of orientation by key workers to ensure the child and families’ cultures are respected in the service.
- We have ordered books in different languages and through our parents/teacher meetings, we will encourage parents’ participation and preferences regarding their cultural experiences and make this evident in the classroom environments and ethos of the service.

Area 4

- Although not sighted on the day of inspection, we do have a transition document in place from The Blueskies Initiative and work closely with the local schools during the school year to support transition periods.