EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Dunaree Childcare and Pre-school Limited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>1 Mayfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tyrellspass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>County Westmeath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>16WH0159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date of Inspection: 16-10-2018
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of inspection</th>
<th>16-10-2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspection activities undertaken</td>
<td>Interaction with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with practitioner</td>
<td>Review of relevant documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation of interactions during session</td>
<td>Feedback to practitioner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Dunaree Childcare and Pre-school Limited is one of two privately owned and operated settings. The setting is located outside the town of Tyrellspass. It provides full day, sessional pre-school and after-school services. On the day of the inspection, ten children and one practitioner were present. The practitioner 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; the setting chose to accept the report without response.

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 good.
- A friendly atmosphere is evident as children and parents arrive into the setting. The practitioner engages in a brief exchange with many of the parents.
- The practitioner uses a range of strategies to prepare the children for a change in the routine. The children are familiar with these strategies resulting in gradual and unhurried movement between activities and areas.
- Most children appear settled and comfortable in the learning environment. On arrival, they independently remove their shoes and put on their indoor shoes. The children select a play area of choice and become immediately engaged with the available resources.
- Relationships between the practitioner and the children are respectful. The practitioner is caring and shows warmth in her interactions with the children.
- A few visuals, providing some recognition of children’s individual identities, are displayed in the environment. These include displays of children’s artwork and the use of their names and photographs to indicate their coat hooks in the hallway.
- On the day of the inspection, the routine involved the children sitting for lengthy periods during adult-initiated experiences. This resulted in many of the children becoming disengaged and disinterested.
- During brief child-led play periods, children have autonomy and agency to make decisions about their learning and development.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to review and reorganise the daily routine to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated experiences. Greater opportunities for children to lead their own learning will support them to follow their individual interests, ideas, thoughts and theories about their world.
- It is advised that opportunities be provided to recognise, respect and celebrate the diversity of each child within the learning environment. Furthermore, strengthening the visual information and messages of the local community in an inclusive learning environment will provide a positive and powerful message to the children about their individual and group identities.
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 fair.
- The use of a short-term curriculum plan, with links made to Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework, is in its infancy. The curriculum, informed by adult chosen themes, places a strong emphasis on the teaching of letters, numbers and the promotion of crafts. Planning does not take account of the children’s interests, strengths or learning dispositions.
- On the day of the inspection, samples of children’s developmental checklists were available. These do not gather sufficient information to build a rich picture of individual children’s learning and development. There is no evidence that the information gathered informs the curriculum planning process or the current provision for children’s learning. The practitioner reports that plans are in place to move towards a narrative assessment approach.
- The practitioner interacts with the children in a considerate way. A ‘helper system’ is in operation and provides opportunities for the children to take responsibility for their environment. Occasionally, the practitioner encourages the children to help tidy and prepare the environment.
- The indoor learning environment is safe and clean. It provides for a variety of learning experiences, such as construction play, socio-dramatic play and manipulative play. The large quantity of resources and materials limits the effectiveness and accessibility of the various spaces of offer.
- In the daily routine, few opportunities are provided for extended, child-initiated play experiences. During the inspection, the majority of learning experiences, such as circle time, tabletop activities and craft experiences, were adult-led activities.

Actions advised
- The practitioner is encouraged to pursue the setting’s plan to introduce a ‘learning record’ style to document children’s learning and development. In so doing, it is important that this narrative form of assessment captures what the children can do, their strengths, interests and learning dispositions. This will ensure that a richer picture of each child’s learning experiences and achievements can be portrayed for children, parents, families and practitioners.
- It is advised that the selection of resources and materials available to children be reviewed. To this end, children would benefit from an array of carefully selected, high-quality and open-ended resources and materials that are easily accessible and freely available. This will help to extend and enrich the children’s hands-on experiences in learning more about the environment around them.
- The practitioner is advised to review the length of time allocated to child-initiated play experiences in the setting. The ‘play’ pillar in the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide will be a useful resource in this regard.

AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is fair.
- The children display enjoyment and interest during their self-chosen play experiences. On the day of the inspection and during adult-led experiences and activities, most children complied and followed the practitioner’s lead. In the latter part of the morning, many children became restless and distracted.
- During few child-initiated experiences, the children demonstrate the ability to play co-operatively with one another. On the morning of the inspection, children collaborated together using the tractors as they worked on the farm.
- Many children are aware of their play achievements; they discuss and share these with the practitioner. There are a small number of displays that illustrate the children’s learning achievements in the immediate learning environment.
- Children demonstrate appropriate fine-motor skills in their manipulation of puzzles, jigsaws and other manipulative resources available in the environment.
- Children did not use the outdoor learning environment or have an opportunity to develop their physical fitness or gross motor skills on the day of the inspection.
A small number of children demonstrate the confidence to discuss their families and real-life experiences. There are minimal opportunities provided to the children to develop an appreciation of their individual identity and the identities of others.

On the morning of the inspection, the practitioner, in her response to the children’s behaviour, regularly used negative language during minor age-appropriate conflicts between the children. Many opportunities to guide and facilitate children to resolve their own conflicts were missed.

Actions advised

- A review of the daily routine, with an extension to the time allocated to child-initiated learning experiences, is advised. This will support children to have greater choice to choose, plan and organise their own learning.
- It is advised that opportunities for their physical development be made available to the children on a daily basis. In the event that it is deemed not suitable to go outdoors, the introduction of a physical activity that can be facilitated in the indoor learning environment is advised.
- The practitioner is advised to share and discuss the boundaries of acceptable behaviour with the children. Providing the children with the skills to guide their own behaviour will support their evolving capacity to negotiate and resolve small conflicts that occur naturally from time to time. To this end, the use of positive, authentic and meaningful feedback that affirms and reinforces the children’s appropriate actions is also advised.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is fair.
- Monthly meetings occur between the practitioner and the setting owner where the curriculum is discussed and planned. There are no opportunities provided for whole-setting meetings or meetings between the two settings.
- The practitioner demonstrates a commitment to her role and a desire to provide quality early years provision in the setting.
- The setting has availed of some mentoring from the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) and the local county childcare committee.
- Information is shared informally with parents about the children’s learning and development at the beginning and end of each day. Curriculum plans are included in the monthly newsletters. Documentation about individual children’s learning and development is also provided to parents at the end of the pre-school year.
- The setting owner and practitioner facilitate an annual open day for new children starting in the setting each September. Discussions with the children about their transition from pre-school to primary school are facilitated in the latter half of the year.

Actions advised

- It is advised that the setting engage with Better Start Early Years Quality Development Service. This will support ongoing quality development practices in the setting to ensure that provision is of a high quality and in keeping with best practice.
- The setting owner and practitioner are advised to regularly engage in informal and formal reflective practice to evaluate policies, procedures and practice in the setting. This reflection will support management and practitioners to continuously refine provision and, in doing so, improve outcomes for young children’s learning and development. The ‘Curriculum Foundations’ section in the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide will be helpful in this process.
- Building on the positive relationships that have been established with parents, it is advised that parents’ input and awareness of their child’s strengths, interests and learning dispositions be strengthened. To this end, regularly sharing of documented information on children’s learning and achievements with parents is advised. Furthermore, consideration needs to be given to providing opportunities that encourage parents’ contributions and feedback on their child’s learning on a more regular basis.
CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The practitioner engaged in the post-inspection feedback meeting in a positive manner, demonstrating interest in the future development of provision. The capacity of the setting to implement the actions advised above is fair.

Summary of Overall Inspection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quality Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of context to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of processes to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of children’s learning experiences and achievements</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Language used in Early-Years Education-focused Inspection reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of children.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Published June 2019