**EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION**

**REPORT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Clever Little Bunnies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>Ballywaltrim Community Centre</td>
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<td>Ballywaltrim</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bray</td>
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<td></td>
<td>County Wicklow</td>
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<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>16WW0284</td>
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**Date of Inspection: 22-01-2019**
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 inspectors 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>22-01-2019</th>
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| Inspection activities undertaken | Interaction with children  
| Meeting with setting practitioner/manager  
| Observation of interactions during the pre-school session  
| Review of relevant documents  
| Feedback to setting practitioner/manager |

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Clever Little Bunnies was established in 2017. It is located in Ballywaltrim Community Centre, Bray, Co. Wicklow. The setting provides a morning sessional service for children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. On the day of the inspection, the practitioner/manager and five children were present. 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 warm, inviting atmosphere has been successfully created. The practitioner/manager knows the children and their families well and nurturing and respectful relationships are evident.
- The practitioner/manager is sensitive to the needs and interests of each child. Interactions are positive and even tones are used throughout the morning to affirm and encourage the children.
- Ample opportunities for free play are provided throughout the morning. The children are active agents in choosing and organising their own learning activities.
- Snack time is seen as a relaxed, social occasion where the practitioner/manager and the children engage in shared conversations. Some of the children help to prepare the room for snack; they place a table cloth and a vase of flowers on the table.
- The children’s sense of identity and belonging is supported through the displays of their art work and photographs that show their engagement in activities in the setting. There is potential to build on the ways in which the children’s individual identity and belonging and cultural diversity are reflected in the setting.
- A daily routine is visually represented in the room. On the day of inspection, the routine changed a number of times to meet the needs and interests of the children. In one instance, the transition occurred without sufficient advance warning when a small number of the children were keenly engaged in an activity.

Actions advised

- The practitioner/manager is advised to develop further strategies to support the children’s understanding of the current daily routine and their management of times of transitions. Visually representing the routine and displaying it at the children’s level will support the children to engage with the routines and transitions throughout the morning. This will also promote discussion and reflection with the children in instances where the routine changes to include their emerging interests.
- The practitioner/manager is advised to further reflect the children as members of families and the wider community and their cultural diversity in the setting. Providing additional resources for play and displays, such as a family wall and a birthday chart, will support the children’s sense of identity and belonging and their growing understanding of diversity.
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.
- Play is the central medium through which the children learn and develop in this setting. A range of play types is made available, including sensory play, physical play, creative play and imaginative play. The curriculum approach also includes elements of the Montessori Method. Some links with the themes of Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework are evident.
- The long-term and medium-term plans are based on pre-determined themes; this supports the promotion of a holistic learning experience for the children. Short-term plans and practice are informed by the selected themes and account is also taken of the children's interests; the links between planning and the children’s interests are not currently formally documented.
- Assessment approaches used to gather information on the children's learning experiences and achievements include individual learning records and the children's art work. A template, which is used to support the transition from pre-school to primary school, is also completed. There is scope to build on the existing range of assessment practices and to include the voice of the child to capture their interests and ideas.
- The indoor environment supports the children’s play and learning experiences. A range of resources is provided, including a play kitchen and accessories, a construction area, a dolls' house and a book area with soft seating. The practitioner also plans to build on the range of resources through the addition of more open-ended materials.
- The children have regular access to an outdoor play area. On the day of the inspection, the children painted, engaged in mark making, ran and jumped in the outdoor environment.
- The practitioner/manager effectively models and promotes the children's emergent language, literacy and numeracy skills throughout the morning. These skills were supported effectively through the use of songs, rhymes and stories.

Actions advised

- The practitioner/manager is advised to extend her current assessment practices to build a richer picture of children's learning and development. This could include involving the children in the planning and self-assessment of their learning experiences. The use of 'Planning and Assessment' pillar in the Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide will be beneficial in this regard.
- The practitioner/manager is advised to incorporate the children’s emerging interests in the short-term plans.

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 capable, competent and articulate. During the inspection, the children expressed their views and opinions with confidence.
- The children engage with interest in a range of freely-chosen play experiences. These include water play, sensory play, mark making and painting.
- The children are motivated and curious and they demonstrate enjoyment and delight in their learning. They are developing positive dispositions towards learning, such as persistence, resilience, creativity and curiosity, and these dispositions are being effectively supported by the practitioner/manager.
- During the inspection, the children engaged in a science experiment, which was planned in response to their emerging interests. There was a brief discussion prior to the activity. This provided the children with an opportunity to explore a range of concepts including, volume, weight, size and shape. There is potential to extend the children’s learning further by providing opportunities for discussion and reflection on their learning, both individually and as a group.
- The children demonstrate a strong sense of achievement and are proud of their creations. On the day of inspection, some children’s excitement and anticipation was clearly evident as they waited to share their mark making with their parents.
The children play independently, in small groups or pairs. They are developing positive relationships with their peers.

The children are developing their social and independence skills. Some of the children put on their own coats and manage their personal care needs. On the day of the inspection, the practitioner/manager provided assistance to a number of the children in managing their personal care needs and routines, for example, taking off coats and wiping noses.

**Actions advised**

- The practitioner/manager is advised to provide increased opportunities for children to give voice to their thoughts and to reflect on their learning experiences. This will also support the children's oral language development and their thinking skills, including their ability to make connections between new and previous learning.

- In order to build on the children's developing social skills, the practitioner/manager is advised to extend the opportunities that are currently provided for children to manage their personal care routines independently.

**AREA 4**

**QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING**

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.

- The practitioner/manager is committed to self-reflection and ongoing improvement in provision for the children.

- The professionalism of the practitioner/manager is evident in her ongoing commitment to continuing professional development. She has recently completed training on the *Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines* and is currently enrolled in the Leadership for Inclusion in Early Childhood (LINC) programme.

- The practitioner/manager communicates regularly with parents to support the participation of each child. An open-door policy for parents is in place. There are daily informal discussions with parents at arrival and collection times. A parent handbook and setting policies are provided to all parents.

- Parents are provided with opportunities to formally discuss their child’s progress and learning experiences with the practitioner/manager. This is facilitated through one-to-one meetings that are generally scheduled in February and again at the end of the year.

- The transition from pre-school to primary school is supported through conversations with the children and their parents. School uniforms are also introduced into the children’s play. The practitioner/manager has developed some links with the local primary school and plans to develop more formal links over the coming months.

**Actions advised**

- In order to build on existing practices to support the children's transition from pre-school to primary school, the practitioner/manager is advised to progress her plan to create more formal links with the local primary schools.

- To enhance the practitioner’s/manager’s current self-evaluation practices, the use of the *Aistear Siolta Practice Guide* is advised. This will support the affirmation of good practice and the identification of areas for development as part of the ongoing review and self-evaluation processes.

**CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE**

The capacity of the setting to implement the actions advised above is very good. The manager/practitioner shows a commitment to the ongoing improvement of the children's learning experiences. This was evident from her constructive engagement in professional dialogue during the post-inspection meeting.

**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>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>Good</td>
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**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>
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<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>
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