### EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

**REPORT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Name</th>
<th>Attracta’s Childcare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting Address</td>
<td>Hillcrest</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lugduff</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tinahely</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>County Wicklow</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCYA number</td>
<td>18WW0317</td>
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**Date of Inspection:** 16-05-2019
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 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>16-05-2019</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspection activities undertaken</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Meeting with setting owner</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Observation of interactions during a number of sessions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Interaction with children</td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Review of relevant documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Feedback to setting owner</td>
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CONTEXT OF SETTING

Attracta’s Childcare is a privately-owned setting located in Tinahely, County Wicklow. The setting has provided a morning session for children accessing the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme since September 2018, and an afternoon session since January 2019. Both sessions were observed as part of this inspection. A play-based approach is used and on the day of the inspection, nine children and the owner/sole practitioner were in attendance. The owner/sole 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 very good.
- There is a warm, welcoming atmosphere. Parents bring their children into the room and children self-register their attendance by selecting their name and putting it on the board.
- The flexible daily routine is on display on the parents’ notice board but is not visible to the children. Transitions are minimal as the practitioner responds to the children’s play and follows their lead. On the day of the inspection, this approach worked very well for the older children but was not so effective with the younger children, as a small number appeared uncertain about the sequence of activities.
- Children choose whether to have snack indoors or outdoors. On the day of the inspection, they decided they wanted to eat outdoors and the practitioner sat and chatted with them about their lunches.
- The children display very secure relationships with the practitioner and seek her out for comfort, guidance and support. Consistent, meaningful praise and encouragement are offered to all children. This supports and motivates them in their learning.
- The uniqueness of each child is reflected in the children’s photographs and their handprints on display in the room. The practitioner has yet to implement her plans to support children’s awareness of the variety of cultures and abilities present in the community.
- Parents and family members visit the setting for the Halloween and Christmas party and the end-of-year graduation.
- Children are learning about their local community through the visit of the local postman, their walks around the area, including trips to the recycling centre and to the nearby farm to visit the llamas and goats.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to develop a visual daily routine with photographs of the children engaged in different activities and to display it at a height accessible to them. The addition of further transition strategies, such as a bell and timers, would support younger children to follow the sequence of activities and to move more confidently from one activity to the next.
- The practitioner is advised to make visible within the setting the diversity of cultures, abilities, languages and genders in the community. This could be achieved using displays, resources and books, and through discussions on family celebrations.
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.
- There is a play-based curriculum in place that is aligned to the principles of *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. The practitioner undertakes monthly planning based on seasonal themes and these plans are divided into weekly topics. At the time of the inspection, planning did not include children’s individual emergent interests.
- The practitioner records children’s learning each month and shares this information with parents. These records are broadly descriptive accounts of children’s engagement in activities and do not include the next steps for their progression.
- The practitioner knows the children very well and views them as competent and confident learners. She listens carefully to the children and effectively encourages them to listen to each other and to wait until their friend has finished speaking.
- The practitioner consistently uses a variety of positive interactions, such as open-ended questions and prompts, to extend the children’s thinking and their problem-solving skills. For example when the parachute fell down, she asked the children, ‘Why do you think it fell down?’ and ‘How can you stop it falling?’
- The practitioner plays alongside, and with the children. Many playful interactions were observed, such as when the children began to spontaneously sing ‘Ring-a-ring-a-Rosie’ and asked the practitioner to join in with them.
- A log cabin provides a well-designed indoor area with a range of accessible play materials. A number of Montessori materials are available to children, such as knobless cylinders, dressing frames, the pink tower, sound boxes, insets and colour frames.
- The practitioner places a strong emphasis on children’s outdoor play and children spend most of their time outdoors regardless of the weather. A good variety of specific interest areas, such as a mud kitchen, sand and water play, an area with swings, tree house and slide, are in place.
- The practitioner models mathematical language, and uses songs, rhymes and every day activities to promote children’s emergent literacy and numeracy skills and understanding. In addition, she avails of Montessori materials, including the sandpaper letters and numbers, for children who will be transitioning to primary school. Colouring-in and pre-writing templates linked to the weekly topic are used.

Actions advised

- The practitioner is advised to broaden her current planning practices by developing a two-year planning cycle for children who are in attendance for two years. The addition of short-term plans that include the children’s individual emergent interests is also advised.
- The practitioner is advised to extend the current methods of gathering information on the children’s learning by recording children’s learning and achievements and clearly identifying the next steps for their progression. In so doing, the addition of the children’s strengths and dispositions is advised.
- It is advised that the practitioner build on her current practice of using everyday activities, songs and rhymes to promote children’s pre-literacy and pre-numeracy experiences. This can be achieved by reducing the emphasis on the teaching of letters and numbers through the use of workbooks and template-based activities.

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 are happy and show real enjoyment in their play activities. Laughter is heard throughout the session.
The positive learning dispositions shown by the children help them to achieve mastery and success in their learning experiences. On the day of the inspection, children were observed making decisions about what they wanted to do with the items as they set up an obstacle course. They showed resilience, confidence and achieved success as they persevered in pushing the pegs into the ground. One child mastered the use of the sticky tape dispenser and announced, ‘I did it on my own’.

The children have developed their own clock showing different feelings and were observed discussing feeling sad and upset in the group.

Children have many opportunities to make choices and to organise their own learning. For example, they fill up the watering cans to water the plants, they choose to eat their snack outdoors and they negotiate additional time for tidying up in advance of the storytelling activity.

Children take great enjoyment and actively engage in the storytelling activity. They respond to the practitioner’s playful questions, such as ‘What’s happening in the cave?’ and ‘What happened next?’, that promote their ability to recall. Children are provided with opportunities to bring their favourite books home. This creates a link between pre-school and home.

The children play very well together and there is evidence of strong friendships. The children are confident and comfortable in talking about themselves, their families and home lives.

Children’s sense of identity and belonging is reflected in the height chart and the samples of their art and crafts linked to different topics.

Children are learning everyday Irish words and are able to respond to simple questions in Irish. They use mathematical language, such as higher and lower, bigger and smaller, and count out how many labels they need.

Children take part in the tidy-up routines, share with each other and play together very well. A child is selected each day to give out the lunch bags. This helps children feel connected to their group and helps build their independence and self-help skills.

Children are provided with many excellent opportunities to experience nature. They plant fruit and vegetables, and collect apples and blackberries for baking. On the day of the inspection, the children watered the tomatoes, peas, strawberries and carrots they had planted and brought them home at the end of the day. They took care of an injured hedgehog and were following the progress of a bird and hatchlings that had nested in the hedge.

**Action advised**

- To build on children’s sense of wellbeing, identity and belonging, the practitioner is advised to show photographs of children engaged in activities and to display examples of their free art with their added comments.

**AREA 4**

**QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING**

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.
- The setting is newly established and the owner presents a clear vision for the delivery of a quality learning experience for children. She has a very good understanding of her role and responsibilities in relation to the promotion of quality learning and has recently completed a Major Award at Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Studies.
- The owner access support and information from a variety of agencies, including the local childcare committee, Early Childhood Ireland and Barnardo’s.
- The owner knows the parents and family members very well and this is evident in her conversations with them at arrival and collection times. She uses various approaches to share information with parents. A comprehensive parents’ information book provides information on the settings learning programme, policies and procedures. Parents receive a monthly newsletter and a broad report on children’s learning is sent home each month.
- Transitions into the setting are managed effectively to support children and their parents. A system of reduced hours is available to children at the start of the year and parents are encouraged to stay with their child to help him/her settle.
- The children attending the pre-school go to a number of different primary schools. The owner discusses with the children their move to primary school. She shares an end-of-year report with parents who can then share it with the primary school.
Actions advised

- The owner is advised to avail of the professional self-reflection tools in the *Aistear, Siolta Practice Guide* to support her in the development and review of her practice.
- The owner is advised to introduce the use of a transition box as a resource for discussions with children on their move to primary school. The use of the transition document ‘Mo Scéal’ is advised and would be a useful tool for engaging with the local primary schools.
- The owner is advised to formally share with parents the documented observations about the children at intervals throughout the year.
### 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>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>
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</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>Quality</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very good</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is very good is highly effective in meeting the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good</strong></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><strong>Fair</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is fair requires practice to be improved to meet the needs of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor</strong></td>
<td>Provision that is poor is inadequate and requires significant improvement to meet the needs of children.</td>
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