Early-Years Education-focused Inspection

REPORT

Watergrasshill Play-school
09CC0065

Community Hall, Watergrasshill
Co Cork

Date of inspection: 20 April 2016
CONTEXT OF SETTING

Watergrasshill Playschool provides a morning session for children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. It is in operation sixteen years in Watergrasshill Community Hall in Co Cork and is privately managed. There are 22 children participating in the ECCE Programme and 21 children were in attendance on the morning of inspection along with 4 staff. The management and staff store away all the child-sized furniture and indoor and outdoor play resources every day after each session and set it up each morning. The setting was given the opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised in 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 children’s learning and development is excellent.
- There is a caring, warm and affirming atmosphere within a carefully planned daily routine.
- There is a key worker system in operation where each staff member observes and plans for a small group of children and ensures that families/parents of these children are informed of their progress.
- The routine and structure of the day provides familiarity for the children.
- Transition times are carefully managed and are very respectful of children’s need for flexibility.
- Praise, encouragement and positive feedback to children is clear and readily given.
- Practitioners model positive behaviour strategies and support children through conflict situations.
- Snack time is a social occasion where children sit in groups of four and five.

AREA 2
QUALITY OF PROCESSES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN’S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The quality of the processes to support children’s learning and development is very good.
- The programme of activities provided by practitioners affords children the opportunity to have choice, freedom of movement, responsibility and independence.
- The curriculum is informed by Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework and planning is flexible to the needs of the children.
- Practitioners monitor children’s learning using observations which are based on children’s interests. There is evidence of individual and team reflection on this information which is used purposefully to extend children’s learning.
- Practitioners use a variety of positive interaction strategies which enable children to learn and develop.
- Children are enabled and supported to make clear connections in their learning and to transfer knowledge and skills previously acquired to new situations.
- Practitioners model exploration and wonder for the children and engage with them when investigating natural phenomena.
- The environment, together with a wide range of resources, facilitate suitable play-based, active hands-on exploratory activities for children.

Actions advised
- Practitioners are advised to review the organisation of the space, furniture and presentation of resources to ensure it is aesthetically pleasing and organised.
AREA 3
QUALITY OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children’s learning experiences and achievements is excellent.
- Children are autonomous agents in their own learning.
- The children are happy, confident, interested, active, engaged, attentive and able to stay on task during their own initiated play activities, explorations, and also during adult-guided learning activities.
- Children demonstrate creativity and a sense of wonder and natural curiosity.
- Children display initiative and enthusiasm in caring for the environment, putting materials away, sweeping sand, cleaning tables, re-organising materials and watering plants.
- Children share aspects of their learning achievements with others and the information documented about their learning reflects these achievements.
- Children demonstrate a promising capacity for self-regulation and conflict resolution.
- Children listen, discuss, question and take turns in conversation appropriate to their age and stage of development.

AREA 4
QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is excellent.
- An ethos and spirit of collegiality, commitment, professionalism and team work is evident.
- The manager is very pro-active in organising professional development courses for the staff and supports this with a comprehensive policy and discussion forum on social media.
- The manager and staff are reflective practitioners who ensure that children’s learning and development is central to their work in this setting.
- There are clear channels of communication between the pre-school and families. All parents/families have regular formal and informal meetings on their children’s achievements and progression.
- Transitions into and from the setting are managed effectively.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The capacity within this setting to take the actions advised above is very good as demonstrated in the open dialogue and exchange of information with the manager and all staff during the post-inspection meeting.
Summary of Overall Inspection Findings

<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>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of processes to support children’s learning and development</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of children’s learning experiences and achievements</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership for learning</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Language used in Early-Years Education-focused Inspection reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX
SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT
SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report
We are happy with the content of the inspection report. The report has validated our work and has validated our programme of learning that we strive for each year.

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to address the actions advised in the inspection report
Since the visit to our setting we have become more aware of our environment and have strived to make this as natural, creative, and child-led that we can. We are now using our outside area more frequently and have used natural weaving to mark our school name. We are now visible in our community. Photos are available if wanted. A more aesthetically pleasing environment is being planned over the summer break with more time spent in our local woods planned also.

Published June 2016