An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Setting Name	Baldoyle Little People Crèche & Montessori
Setting Address	16 Red Arches The Coast Baldoyle Dublin 13
DCYA number	16FL0567

Date of Inspection: 22-01-2019

An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
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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	22-01-2019
Inspection activities undertaken • Meeting with area manager and setting manager • Observation of interactions during a number of sessions	• Interaction with children • Review of relevant documents • Feedback to owner, area manager, setting manager, educational leader, and practitioners

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Baldoyle Little People Crèche and Montessori, is a private setting located in Baldoyle, Dublin 13. It was established in 2016. It offers three pre-school sessions as part of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. Due to the reduced number of children in attendance on the day of the inspection, the two junior pre-school groups were observed in one room and the senior pre-school children were observed in their room. During the inspection, five practitioners, an assistant employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) and twenty-three children were present. The ECCE staff is at the early stages of formation, with many of the practitioners having joined the staff of the setting during the last nine months. 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 good.
- There is a pleasant caring and welcoming atmosphere in the setting. Practitioners interact warmly with parents and children on arrival and at home time.
- The daily routine provides ample opportunities for children to make decisions in their learning experiences. Activities are predominantly adult initiated. These include activity time, circle time, snack time and garden time. During the inspection, the daily routines in both pre-school rooms were not as reflected in the daily schedule on display.
- The practitioners use a number of effective strategies to inform children of upcoming changes in activities, such as timely verbal reminders and songs. At the time of the inspection, a small number of transitions were overly long and a few children became distracted from their activities.
- Snack time is effectively used to support social occasions as noted through the friendly conversations between the practitioners and children and the children themselves.
- The practitioners' affirmative encouragement and praise to the children for their efforts are a regular feature of their effective practice. The key person approach has recently been introduced in the senior pre-school room. This approach is one in which the practitioner develops a close, secure relationship with the child and acts as a link between the pre-school and the parents.
- The practitioners promote the children's sense of identity and belonging through the displays of the children's art work and the family walls in both pre-school rooms.
- Special occasions are facilitated which bring the children, parents and the practitioners together, such as the Christmas show. Parents have been invited to visit one of the pre-school rooms in order to share their skills with the children.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to review the daily routine to ensure the provision of a greater balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated activities. This will further support children in making independent decisions in their learning.
- The practitioners are advised to create and display a visual schedule to help children predict changes in the activities.

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.
- The staff in the setting is at the early stages of their journey of embedding an emergent-based play curriculum. On many occasions, planning for children's learning predominantly incorporates findings from observations, anecdotal notes and the practitioners' ideas.
- The practitioners use individual learning books to record the children's learning; these include photographs, observations, the children's art work, individual and group learning stories. In the senior pre-school room, the practitioners use an on-line app to record the children's learning. Within the two pre-school rooms, there is potential to increase the frequency of recording of children's individual learning experiences.
- The practitioners use a number of effective interaction strategies to enhance the children's learning. On the day of the inspection, practitioners were comfortable as they sat alongside the children and used open-ended questions and commentary to deepen children's understanding.
- The indoor learning environments have defined interest areas. These promote the children's participation in a variety of playful experiences, including socio-dramatic play, construction and free creative mark making. The children's achievements are respectfully displayed throughout the pre-school rooms. At the time of the inspection, a small amount of sensorial, real and open-ended materials were available to promote children's exploration of their learning.
- The children have access to an outdoor area where they can participate in physical and gross-motor activities. Management and practitioners recognise that there is scope to develop the outdoor area and have discussed ways to enhance children's learning experiences.
- The practitioners promote children's early literacy skills through the provision of ample opportunities for their evolving mark-making skills and the respectful way that they document the children's comments on their creations. During the inspection, a small amount of rhyming and story reading activities were facilitated to support children's emergent language development.
- The children are supported to learn in an inclusive learning environment. Practitioners have engaged with AIM and they work in partnership with parents to support children's participation in the programme.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to embed their planning and assessment practices in line with an emergent-based curriculum and *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. This will further help them to plan and document learning experiences that are consistently responsive to the children's emerging interests and their individual learning needs.
- The practitioners are advised to use the audit tool in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* to further enhance the learning environments and the breadth and variety of resources and materials.
- The practitioners are advised to extend the range of activities to support children's emergent language skills. The tip sheet 'Enhancing Language' from the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* could assist in this regard.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is good.
- The children demonstrate interest and engagement in their learning. They displayed positive learning dispositions, such as persistence, through their engagement with materials as they participated in the socio-dramatic play of 'feeding the baby'.
- The children are supported to make choices in learning activities. On the day of the inspection, children had sufficient opportunities to make independent decisions regarding their learning.
- The children experience success regularly. This was particularly noticeable as they self-served their fruit at snack-time and through their independent self-care and self-help skills.
- The children have unlimited access to their learning journals to review and to place their achievements within. On the day of the inspection, a few children independently reviewed their journals with others.

- The positive relationships that exist amongst the children contributes to the effective collaborative and co-operative play which they experience. During the inspection, children played with each other in pairs and small groups. Many children display their developing personal and social skills which help them deal with social situations, such as turn taking and negotiating.
- The children are provided with a number of opportunities to develop an awareness of the meaning of mathematical language and concepts. Throughout the sessions, children were observed counting, discussing quantity and reflecting on differences in ages.
- From time to time, members of the local community visit the setting to share their skills. These visits help foster children's awareness of members of the community. There is potential for the provision of more opportunities for children to further develop this emerging awareness.
- During the inspection, many children demonstrated confidence and curiosity in exploring their learning and their environment. This was evident in their enthusiastic responses about recycling and their interest in trucks and transport.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to provide formal opportunities for the children to reflect on their learning and their achievements. This could be facilitated through regular formal discussions where the children can review their learning journals with each other and the practitioners.
- The practitioners are advised to provide a greater range of resources and learning experiences to deepen the children's emergent mathematical skills and understanding. The additional use of everyday mathematical resources and playful activities will facilitate this.
- The practitioners are advised to provide a greater range of learning experiences to help maximise and foster children's awareness of the roles of members of the community.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is good.
- There is a strong sense of collaboration and teamwork amongst the management team and the practitioners. Their commitment to the provision of a high quality service was positively noted.
- Staff meetings take place every two months. The area manager reported that a quality improvement programme has recently been implemented to support improvement in professional practice. The *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* has yet to be used as part of this process.
- Continuing professional development is valued in the setting. At the time of the inspection, in-house training on autism had been arranged. Management has implemented a number of effective practices to support practitioners to participate in accredited and non-accredited training.
- The practitioners use a number of effective strategies to share children's learning with parents. Examples include the daily sharing of information, the monthly newsletters and the sending home of the children's learning journals throughout the pre-school year.
- Parents receive an introductory booklet regarding organisational matters when their child commences the setting. Towards the end of spring, one-to-one meetings are facilitated between the practitioners and parents to discuss their child's learning and progress.
- In order to support children's transition into the setting, children are invited for an orientation week where they meet other children and the practitioners.
- The area manager reported that plans are being drawn up to support the establishment of formal links with local primary schools to ensure continuity in the children's learning as they progress to primary school.

Actions advised

- Management and practitioners are advised to use the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* to help strengthen their self-review and professional practices. This could support the team to identify areas in need of improvement and to develop an action plan based on agreed, identified priorities.
- National training support in the use of the Aistear Curriculum Framework is to be offered in 2019. This may be beneficial to further support the practitioners as part of their professional development.
- It is advised that the parents' introduction booklet be reviewed to include information on the curriculum. This will further support the sharing of information between the setting and parents on the curriculum and the children's learning.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The capacity of the setting to implement the actions advised above is very good as reflected in the commitment of the management team and the practitioners for high quality learning outcomes for the children.

Summary of Overall Inspection

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

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APPENDIX

SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT
SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

- We welcome the feedback from the report and will take the opportunity to take on board any recommendations made. The inspection conducted was carried out in a positive way highlighting areas in which we can extend on learning which we will take forward.

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

- We have increased the frequency of recording individual learning experiences as oppose to mainly focusing on group learning experiences. Records of individual learning experiences can be seen in the children's individual learning Journals.
- A visual schedule of the daily routine has been erected for the children to anticipate change.
- Staff comprehension around the Aistear guidelines for emergent interest and child-led lead learning is a focus with training evenings set in place around Aistear Siolta practice guide.
- The children's learning journals are low down and accessible to the children. The children are free to add to their journal or take it out and reflect on it with their peers. Our Educators also encourage conversation around the child's learning journal when opportunity prevails.
- Photos of things in our local community have been erected around the room and conversations around these photos are encouraged
- A wellbeing survey was conducted within our service through an external agency. From review and recommendations, a performance management model has been put in place. This will help guide practice in terms of self-reflection and professional practice. Self-goals and action plans will be set in line with Aistear Siolta practice guide