An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Early Years Education Inspection (EYEI)

Final Report

Setting name	Bee Happy Childcare
Setting address	55 Clochrán Kilcloghans Tuam County Galway H54WK24
TUSLA registration number	TU2015GY077
DCEDIY number	21GY0598
Date of inspection	28-04-2023
Date of issue of report	06-10-2023

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:

- Quality of the context to support children's learning and development
- Quality of processes to support children's learning and development
- Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements
- 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

Dates of inspection	28-04-2023
Inspection activities undertaken • Pre-inspection meeting with the setting owner/manager • Review of setting documentation and records of children's learning and development • Review of the education resources and facilities • Observations of interactions during two sessions • Interaction with the children • Feedback meeting with the setting owner/manager and owner/lead educator	

Context of setting

Bee Happy Childcare is a privately owned and operated early years setting located in Tuam, County Galway. It was established in 2021 and provides two preschool sessions to children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. There were twelve children, a lead educator and an assistant educator present in the junior room. In the senior room, there were seven children and the owner/lead educator. The early years setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised of the report; a response was not received from the setting.

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 was very good.
- There was a visual daily routine on display in both learning environments outlining the proposed schedule of the day. On the day of inspection, extended periods of child-led play, outdoor time and snack time were observed in both preschool rooms. The transitions between activities were smooth, with reassuring prompts and songs effectively used.
- The children were very well supported to develop their self-help and independence skills. They took care of their own belongings, tidied up the resources, washed their hands, managed their lunches and retrieved drinks independently.
- The educators knew the children very well. Conversations were heard throughout the morning about the children's home-life, their parents and their plans for the weekend. The educators further nurtured the children's sense of identity and belonging through a family wall, birthday chart and the provision of the children's individual coat-hooks.
- Snack time was a very social occasion where the educators sat with the children and conversed in a friendly and informal manner.
- The educators supported the children's knowledge of their local community through a large display of local landmarks and amenities, which was displayed in the hallway leading to the learning environment. The setting's *Management Curriculum Plan* outlined plans for the children to go for walks in the locality, visit places of interest in the community, and welcome visitors, such as the beekeeper, to the setting.
- There was one large diversity display in both environments with a map, flags and pictures of people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The curriculum plans showed how the educators planned to celebrate some cultural events.

Action advised

- The educators are advised to enhance the current selection of resources and activities freely available to support the children's developing knowledge of diversity, the wider world and their own cultural identity.

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 was good.
- The early years educators implemented a play-based curriculum that was informed by *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*.
- Long-term, medium-term and short-term curriculum plans were consistently completed to support the provision of a playful pedagogy. The plans outlined activities and topics of interest which the educators intended to explore with the children. These included songs, stories and poems, arts and crafts, sensorial activities and outside time. The children's interests did not explicitly feature in the plans reviewed.
- The observations of the children's learning and development were completed by the child's key-person on a monthly basis using the learner record template. The sample of observations reviewed described the children's developing physical, communication and problem-solving skills. The language in these observations was educational and outlined the children's developing positive dispositions for learning. Specific next steps to support each child's learning and development were not currently being outlined.
- The inviting, bright indoor learning environments contained a range of resources arranged into distinct learning areas. Resources included table-top games, mark-making and creative items, construction toys and a variety of socio-dramatic materials.
- Both preschool rooms provided a relaxing reading area with a choice of good quality relevant books which supported the children's literacy development. Commendably, the educators had clearly displayed vocabulary in the relevant areas of socio-dramatic play.
- The educators actively joined in with the children in their play experiences and supported their meaningful participation. There were some conversations between the educators and the children, where the educators recapped on previous learning and sought further clarification from the children.
- The educators' warmth and respect for each child were very evident which created a very naturally inclusive environment. Additionally, one of the educators had committed to completing the Leadership for Inclusion (LINC) course in the near future.

Actions advised

- The educators are advised to ensure that the short-term plans are emergent in nature, with maximum focus on developing the children's current interests. The short-term planning template from the *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide* should be very useful in this regard. Anecdotal notes could be used to capture the children's interests throughout the session.
- The educators are advised to use the regular observations of the children's learning to identify and promote the progression of specific next steps in each child's development.
- The educators are advised to develop their current interaction strategies to regularly support and extend the children's learning and critical thinking during play, using open-ended commentary and questioning.

Area 3: Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements

- The quality of children's learning experiences and achievements was very good.
- The children were engaged and motivated, as they played co-operatively with the learning resources, and during the activities, provided.
- The children were comforted and supported by the educators, as required, throughout the session.
- The children were given a sense of ownership over their activities of the day. The educators sought their opinion about the choice and the order of the events. The educators listened to the children and responded accordingly.
- The children's scrapbooks contained a range of template-based activities related to learning themes. There were photographs which showcased the children's engagement with the activities on offer and some examples of the children's self-directed art. The scrapbooks also contained the children's creative interpretations of their families, their hopes for the New Year, and a story they had written for World Book Day. This scrapbook was freely available to the children in the senior room. The formal observations of the children's learning and development were not contained in this scrapbook.
- The educators reported that the children spent time outdoors on a daily basis. The outdoor learning environment provided them with opportunities to develop their gross motor skills through appropriate equipment, adequate space and suitable support and encouragement from the educators. The children played on the swings and the slide, they climbed and they used the ride-on toys. The educators facilitated active games such as Duck, Duck, Goose.
- The children demonstrated their developing fine motor skills by moulding and manipulating playdough and while engaging enthusiastically with the sensorial resources on offer, such as experimenting with different cereals, soil, and the farm-themed tuff tray. Paint was not freely accessible to the children.
- The children were developing a good understanding of aspects of education for sustainable development, including how to take care of our environment through recycling. They were also learning about nourishing their bodies through healthy eating.

Actions advised

- The educators are advised to create a record of each child's learning and holistic development. This record should contain samples of their child-directed artwork, the formal observations of their learning and development, and the children's own documented thoughts and ideas. If made accessible to all of the children, this record should offer a very meaningful way for them to become actively involved in their own learning journey.
- To support the children's creative expression, the educators are advised to reduce the use of template-based art and place a stronger focus on art the children make themselves. Arranging for the paint to be freely available and accessible to the children during their child-led play should assist with this.

Area 4: Quality of management and leadership for learning

- The quality of management and leadership for learning was very good.
- The owner/manager and the educators facilitated monthly staff meetings. Some of the topics discussed during these meetings included how best to support the induction of new staff, regulatory issues, and curriculum development. Internal review, self-evaluation and reflection through the use of *Síolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education* would greatly enhance this practice.

- The managers and the educators completed mandatory regulatory training and engaged in courses with the local county childcare committee, such as one on healthy eating. They have also committed to the inclusion course.
- The educators valued parents as partners in their children's learning and development and they accommodated a system of two-way sharing of information. They engaged in daily informal chats, sent out emails, facilitated telephone calls, shared the children's learning journals with them on a termly basis and sought their input on transition documents. Additionally, the parents visited the setting for celebrations such as Christmas and the children's graduation from preschool.
- The educators ensured that the children were supported to settle-in by capturing personal information on each child with an *All About Me* document. The children and their parents were encouraged to view the setting and attend an open evening. The children attended the setting on a staggered basis until they felt comfortable staying on their own for the entire session. The parents were welcome to stay and actively support the children as they became familiar with their new learning environment.
- To support each child's move to primary school, the educators completed *Mo Scéal* and sent it to the relevant schools. The template included information on the child's individual learning and development. The content of the forms was developed in collaboration with the children and their parents. The children in the senior preschool room engaged in natural conversations about going to *big school* and these conversations were supported by photographs of the local schools on display in the senior room.

Action advised

- The managers and the educators are advised to engage with a systematic review of practices and procedures through the use of the *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide* at their regular staff meetings. Evidence arising from these reviews should support the creation of action plans for improvement.

Summary of overall inspection

Area	Quality level
Quality of context to support children's learning and development	Very good
Quality of processes to support children's learning and development	Good
Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements	Very good
Quality of management and leadership for learning	Very good

Language used in Early Years Education Inspection Reports

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the setting using the language which is shown below.

Level	Description
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.*

The following resources can be used by ELC settings in their quality improvement:

Aistear Siolta Practice Guide

Department of Education Insights – Quality in Early Years Education webinars