An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Service Name	Cheeky Cherubs Early Years Schools
Service Address	Cork City Council Workplace Crèche City Hall Eglinton Street Cork City
DCYA number	09CY0003

Date of Inspection: 02-05-2018

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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 service 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 service.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector(s) 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 service's provision in each area.

Early-Years Education Inspection

Date of inspection	02-05-2018
Inspection activities undertaken • Meeting with service manager • Meeting with practitioners	• Observation of interactions during a number of sessions • Interaction with children • Review of relevant documents • Feedback to service manager and practitioners

CONTEXT OF SERVICE

Cheeky Cherubs Early Years Schools Workplace Crèche is a privately owned, urban early years facility with two sister services in Cork. Two practitioners offer early year's education to a maximum of sixteen children during the morning session. Most children stay for full day care. On the day of the inspection thirteen children were present. The two practitioners, the two directors and the manager attended the post-inspection feedback meeting. The setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised in this 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 excellent.
- A very caring ethos and a beautiful, warm, welcoming and affirming atmosphere are evident. The positive regard which practitioners show for the children and their families is very apparent. There is obvious respect for and recognition of the uniqueness and individuality of each child.
- The children are confident, competent and self-reliant. They are clearly active agents in choosing and organising their learning and development activities. They organise their snack and snack table. They set up and organise their painting activity and clean up afterwards completely autonomously.
- Snack time is utilised highly effectively as a social occasion, promoting language development through small group conversations. This facilitates a relaxed, family mealtime atmosphere. These mealtimes are utilised as an opportunity to promote well-being and a healthy lifestyle. For example, lovely, informative conversations took place about the importance of drinking water.
- Smooth transitions effectively facilitate learning and development. The children are actively involved and take the lead in tidying up the room and the materials. This involves sorting, pairing, matching, organising, washing tables and chairs; and sweeping the floors. These tasks establish good habits for life. They also offer mathematical learning and foster self-efficacy.
- Practitioners are role models worthy of imitation. They provide effective guidance and encourage positive behaviour. Modelling effective conflict-resolution strategies enables the children to become self-efficient and self-reliant.
- Children's identity and belonging are nurtured effectively. Diversity is recognised, valued and affirmed within an inclusive learning environment. This is evident in the displays, in the environment and particularly in the interactions between practitioners and children.
- Family members work close by and have opportunities to accompany the children on outings. They are also actively encouraged to visit the preschool and share their interests, expertise and knowledge with the children.

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 excellent.
- A broad-based, long-term, medium-term and short-term curriculum, informed by *Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* is documented and implemented.
- Practitioners are highly competent in the development and implementation of an emergent and enquiry-based curriculum. The key-practitioner system in operation facilitates the planning of an individual and small group curriculum.
- Children's learning records reflect their achievements and development with due regard for their individual interests, needs, approaches and learning dispositions. These records are used to plan the curriculum and are shared in a variety of ways with the families. Each key worker writes a summary of the main daily activities which are linked to learning outcomes. This is displayed on a white board outside the room for the parents. Children's individual profiles are on display in the playroom. They are updated regularly and linked to learning outcomes under the four areas of *Aistear*. The individual art folders are also linked to learning and development outcomes.
- Exemplary quality interactions with the children are facilitated. Practitioners ensure there is a healthy balance between active listening and speaking by using meaningful interaction strategies. These include asking open-ended questions, prompting and scaffolding, which enables co-constructing knowledge with the children.
- The environments offer high play value and are attractive, richly resourced and well structured. Children's achievements are creatively displayed, accessible and are highly informative with regards to learning and developmental outcomes. The small outdoor area is utilised effectively. Practitioners are encouraged to keep working towards expanding the play value.
- Play is utilised as the central medium through which the children learn and develop. There are a myriad of opportunities for the children to plan, talk about and reflect on their play experiences. For example, reflection on free play time was done while crawling and slithering over the floor, pretending to move like the snails that were found outside while weeding.
- Children's emergent language, literacy and numeracy skills are fostered very effectively. There are opportunities for mark-making and exploring high quality books and stories. Singing and movement-games are also included. Mathematical learning happens during everyday life situations. These include laying the table for snack and lunch; organising the painting table and working with the construction materials. A group of boys played with wooden discs pretending they had stolen money from the bank and were eagerly counting their loot. Practitioners are conscious of using mathematical language throughout the day.
- The children make very good use of the myriad of opportunities provided to them to achieve fulfilment, and experience success and mastery during their learning activities. They are consciously enabled and actively supported to make connections in their learning and to transfer their knowledge and skills to new learning situations.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is excellent.
- The children are highly confident and competent; and demonstrate great enjoyment and engagement in their activities. They display positive learning dispositions such as initiative, self-reliance, resilience, resourcefulness and persistence.
- They are also well able to play cooperatively in pairs and small groups, demonstrating creativity and a sense of wonder and natural curiosity.
- The children are well aware of their surrounding community, as they often visit the City Hall for concerts and other events. They take trips to the harbour if the big ships come in; they go shopping at the English market and use the post office.
- The children are articulate, well-spoken and regularly discuss and share their learning achievements with others. They use both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies very skilfully.

- Children's personal and social skills are very well developed. These skills include problem-solving, co-operating, conflict resolution and negotiating. This work is supported by the positive attitude of the practitioners, the very well balanced daily routine and the carefully prepared environment.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is excellent.
- Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is clearly embraced in the ethos of the service: Children's voices are heard and respected and they have participation rights in matters which affect them.
- An ethos of professionalism, collaboration, teamwork and partnership is evident. Planning, review and evaluation are clearly informed and underpinned by *Síolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education*.
- The practitioners and management are highly dedicated. They promote high standards and foster a clear vision and direction for the work of the setting. Continuous professional development opportunities are consistently embraced. Some examples of recent engagement include courses on 'Reggio Emilia', Marta Meo, play-therapy, educational psychology, language development and attendance at a number of conferences.
- Clear, highly effective two-way channels of communication between the setting and the families have been established. The setting has a parent committee. It holds parental information evenings, distributes regular information letters and a comprehensive parental handbook. Parent-practitioner meetings are held and outside speakers are invited to the service regularly. These speakers have included a Nutritionist, an Educational Psychologist and an Occupational Therapist.
- Transitions into and from the setting are managed very effectively. This ensures continuity of experiences and progression in learning and development.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The capacity of the service to continue to work to this exemplary standard of practice is excellent.

Summary of Overall Inspection

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

Language used in Early-Years Education-focused 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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