An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Setting Name	Collins Pre-school
Setting Address	Gormlee Carrignafar County Cork
DCYA number	09CC0162

Date of Inspection: 23-10-2019

An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

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(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 setting's provision in each area.

Early-Years Education Inspection

Date of inspection	23-10-2019
Inspection activities undertaken • Meeting with setting manager • Meeting with practitioners	 • Observation of interactions during a number of sessions • Interaction with children • Review of relevant documents • Feedback to setting manager and practitioners

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Collins pre-school is a rural, privately owned setting. Two practitioners provide early years education for nineteen children on a daily basis under the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. A third practitioner is present on two mornings. On the day of the inspection, all three practitioners and eighteen children were present. 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 very good.
- A very warm, affirming atmosphere is prevalent. The practitioners show a very positive regard for the children and their families and they have established a good rapport with them.
- The daily routine, consists of long, un-interrupted, child-initiated/led, active and interactive, exploratory free play periods indoors and outdoors, interspersed with short, adult-initiated activities. This effectively and consistently promotes children's physical, social and emotional development.
- The children are very active agents in choosing and organising their learning and development activities.
- Snack time is utilised well as a social occasion and an opportunity to promote well-being and a healthy lifestyle.
- Transitions are fluid and times of transitions are managed effectively to support positive learning experiences for the children.
- Practice is child-centred and respect for, as well as recognition of the uniqueness of each child are evident.
- A range of opportunities is utilised to bring families, practitioners and children together in the setting. Community and family members including a dentist visit the setting to share their interests and expertise with the children. There is a 'our beautiful day in the garden' celebration and Christmas get-togethers.

Action advised

- The practitioners are advised to take steps to further develop the children's appreciation of themselves as individuals and as members of groups and to enable them to appreciate diversity. To this end, additional visuals could be displayed, including a family wall in the main playroom at child level, photos above coat hooks and a birthday calendar.

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 very good.
- Many assessment approaches are used to gather information about the children's learning and development. These include unique, individual learning stories, art work displays and a beautiful, interesting and informative group learning journal.
- It is clearly evident through the learning journals that an emergent, enquiry-based curriculum is implemented and that children's interests and learning dispositions are very well followed and supported. Emerging interests need to be more clearly reflected in the short-term curriculum plans which are displayed for the families.
- The children are clearly viewed as competent and confident learners. They are well supported to play with and alongside others. It is evident that the practitioners know the children well and trust their judgements. This is particularly apparent in the outdoor environment, where the children are enabled to engage in a broad range of play opportunities and take positive risks, which support learning and development in a praiseworthy manner.
- The indoor environment is divided in one big, narrow room and a separate smaller room. Both age groups of children mix and share the rooms during free play, but they separate for circle time and snack time. The indoor environments offer a broad range of play opportunities. The main play room contains excessive materials and resources and there are qualification displays on the wall, which are not necessary. The outdoor area is a beautiful, big natural garden. It has a very high play value and many loose, versatile, manipulative and natural materials are provided.
- Play is clearly recognised and utilised as the main medium through which the children learn and develop.
- The children's emerging language, literacy and numeracy are very well fostered throughout the day. Many teachable moments are utilised during free play. Many age and developmentally appropriate activities take place to foster early learning. These include the daily interactive exploration of high-quality stories, rich movement breaks with songs and music, and many opportunities for children to mark-make, engage in arts and crafts and work with play dough.
- There is some evidence that formal teaching methods are used; the children colour in, a formal phonics programme is used, and there is some rote learning of letters, numbers, shapes, colours and Irish words. These activities are not age and developmentally appropriate.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to re-structure the indoor environments and create designated, defined play areas. They are also advised to offer all the environments, including outdoors as free choice during both free play periods.
- Practitioners are advised to focus even more on utilising all the teachable moments during everyday situations, following the children's interests and learning dispositions to foster numeracy, science, literacy and language development. The use of formal teaching methods needs to be discontinued.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is very good.
- All through the morning, the children are deeply engaged and show enjoyment in their learning and a positive sense of well-being.
- During the free play periods, during news time and while a high-quality story is explored interactively, the children demonstrate their capacity to use memory and make judgments, predictions, decisions and informed, healthy choices.
- Particularly through daily, in-depth engagement with the rich, varied, challenging outdoor environment, the children show confidence and co-ordination over their gross and fine motor skills. Their physical fitness, core-strength, sense of balance and spatial awareness are further fostered through this daily engagement. This develops the children's physical school readiness, and supports them to sit still and concentrate and develop a good pencil grip.

- The children make sense of their world by interacting with others, adults and children alike and with their environments, through playing, investigating, exploring and questioning.
- The children demonstrate an evolving capacity for self-regulation and conflict resolution. They seem aware of the rules of acceptable behaviour, but they test the boundaries at times.
- The children are skilled language users and also use non-verbal communication strategies to negotiate, co-operate, turn-take and build relationships.

Action advised

- Practitioners are advised to be clear and consistent about the implementation of the setting's rules and the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is excellent.
- It is very evident, that the practitioners have been working together for many years. The roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and everybody avails of the many opportunities to take leadership in promoting quality learning.
- There is a strong ethos of teamwork, collaboration and partnership. During daily lunchtime meetings, practice is reviewed. The loose notes taken during the morning session are used to support this process and also inform the emergent curriculum plan. A more formal meeting is held once a month and the outcomes of that meeting are documented, so they can be shared, acted upon and reflected on in a professional manner.
- To support continuous professional development, the practitioners engage in network meetings with other service providers and they attend courses when available.
- The pre-school is located in a small rural community and is very much embedded in it. Formal and informal opportunities are utilised to exchange information in a spirit of mutual respect and transparency. As well as friendly, informal daily chats and an active open-door policy, regular newsletters and information evenings ensure vivid two-way communication between the setting and the families.
- Transitions into and from the setting are managed sensitively and effectively, ensuring continuity of experiences and progression in learning. The gradual settling-in process is family friendly and child-oriented. Good working relationships with the local primary school are established.

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	**Very Good**
Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements	**Very Good**
Quality of management and leadership for learning	**Excellent**

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

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

Area 1

Action on advice given:

We have implemented the following

- Birthday Calendar placed on wall.
- Family photo display will be re-positioned into an area more visible to children.

Area 2

On the inspectors' advice, we placed all large and small wooden blocks, tool table and tools, Lego garage with small cars into the small classroom.

This has worked well for the children.

Area 3

We will support children regarding boundaries of acceptable behaviour.