An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Follow-Through Inspection

REPORT

Setting name	Kilbeggan Montessori Pre-school
Setting address	Mullingar Road Kilbeggan County Westmeath
DCYA number	09WH0090

Date of Evaluation: 12-10-2018

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WHAT IS A FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION?

Follow-through inspections evaluate the progress a setting has made on implementing actions advised in an earlier inspection rather than the overall quality of education provision in a setting. Inspectors also advise the setting on strategies and actions to enable them to fully address actions advised in the earlier inspection report.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated the progress the setting has made in implementing actions advised in an earlier inspection under the following headings:

1. Progress achieved to date
2. Summary of findings
3. Actions advised

Inspectors describe the quality of the progress made in each of these areas using the Inspectorate's follow-through quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The follow-through quality continuum explains the terms used by inspectors when evaluating the setting's progress in implementing actions advised.

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.

ORIGINAL INSPECTION DETAILS	FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION DETAILS
Type: Early Years Education Inspection **Date of Inspection: 16-11-2016** **Report Published: Yes**	**Date of Inspection: 12-10-2018**

Follow-through inspection activities

The following activities took place in the course of the follow-through inspection:

- Meeting with the setting owner/manager
- Review of setting documentation and records of children's learning and development
- Review of education resources and facilities
- Observation of part of pre-school session
- Interaction with children

Action advised in original inspection report	Progress achieved to date on implementation of action advised
To further support positive learning experiences for children, a variety of techniques to signal transitions in the daily routine is advised.	**Very good progress** Practitioners have introduced a variety of strategies that effectively support children as they move between activities and areas. The introduction of a timer provides advance verbal notice to the children of the upcoming change and the use of songs and rhythms supports positive learning experiences for children during times of transition.
It is advised that links be made with the local community to enhance children's sense of identity and belonging. These links should be reflected visually for the children within the room.	**Good progress** Aspects of practice have been developed to strengthen children's sense of identity and belonging. The practitioners provide a programme of activities focused on the themes of the local community during the course of the year. Discussions and activities between practitioners and children also acknowledge the various members of the local community. Visual imagery that reflects the people and places within the local community is not consistently present in the learning environment.
It is advised that the daily routine be shared with parents to enable them to be aware of the routines of their child's day.	**Very good progress** Practitioners have added the daily routine to the setting's 'Welcome Pack' for new parents and families. The broad themes documented in the curriculum are also shared with parents throughout the pre-school year.
To build on the good practices established, it is advised that practitioners give consideration to using information about	**Good progress** Last year's group learning journal clearly documents the children's emerging interests and how these informed the curriculum throughout the year. While the practitioners have gathered

children's emerging interests and achievements to better inform plans and practices.	information about the new cohort of children's emerging interests and dispositions since the beginning of the term, they have yet to use this information to inform the development of an emergent curriculum. Short-term plans for the month of September and early October reflect a strong focus on settling-in and pre-determined activities. The practitioners report that they now plan to commence using the information gathered from their observations to inform the curriculum plans going forward.
Review of the indoor area is advised to optimise opportunities for children to engage more with the Montessori materials and the good selection of books on offer.	**Very good progress** A review of the indoor environment has been successfully undertaken resulting in improved accessibility for children to books and Montessori resources. The Montessori materials are now carefully organised into key learning areas. Each section is richly resourced and clearly labelled supporting the children to view and easily access the materials. Practitioners have chosen the most appropriate and relevant books for the children and displayed them on a new book shelf. Additional books are rotated in accordance with the children's interests, the seasons and cultural celebrations.
Children would benefit from additional opportunities to engage in process art activities that encourage creative expression. Practitioners in the service are reminded to limit the use of templated art activities.	**Good progress** Good progress has been made in relation to moving away from product-focused art to more creative, process-orientated art activities. Practitioners are to be commended for their reflective practice in this area which has resulted in a significant reduction in the quantity of colouring-in, template-based activities used in the learning programme. While few templates are used in the setting, a large emphasis is now placed on the creation of crafts. Many of these activities encourage uniformity and lack opportunities to stimulate children's creativity, self-expression and imagination.
It is advised that additional consideration be given to involving children more in taking the lead in planning and engaging in their activities.	**Very good progress** Practitioners have reviewed their practice and now facilitate more child-led learning experiences. They recognise the importance of this and provide many opportunities for children to direct their own learning. Choice is afforded to children throughout the morning when they select which Montessori materials they wish to explore; during play time they decide which areas they wish to engage in.
It is advised that documentation relating to children's varied learning experiences be shared with them such as the use of learning journals.	**Very good progress** Practitioners make a deliberate effort to share documentation with children that reflects their achievements in a range of learning experiences. Children's artwork is proudly displayed in the

	environment for them to engage with. Individual learning journals, group learning journals and photograph albums are easily accessible and provide a platform for children to discuss and share their learning experiences with others.
Establishing links with local primary schools that will support and manage children's transition sensitively out of the setting is advised.	**No progress** On the morning of the inspection, the setting owner sought clarity in relation to this action advised. She intends to now reach out to the local primary schools to develop a working relationship that would support a smooth transition for the children from pre-school to primary school.
The practitioners in the setting are advised to develop a systematic approach to review using the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* (available at www.ncca.ie) to support ongoing improvement in their practices in the setting.	**Good progress** Practitioners have been proactive in reviewing their practice in the setting. They regularly use the action planning templates from the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* in the ongoing development of their practices. At the time of the inspection, the self-evaluation tools from the guide were not used to inform these action plans resulting in a narrow lens with which practice was evaluated.
The practitioners in the setting are advised to build on the good informal relationships they have with parents to share information on children's learning on a more regular and more formal basis.	**Good progress** The practitioners share the children's recorded learning observations regularly with parents in the setting. Opportunities are not currently provided for these records to be brought home where parents could read, share and contribute to them.

Summary of findings

- The practitioners are commended on the measures taken to implement the actions advised and to secure a significant improvement in provision for children's learning. Very positive progress has been made in relation to most of the actions advised in the original inspection report.
- The setting manager and practitioners have worked diligently to develop quality in the setting and are well positioned to address the outstanding areas for development set out in the actions advised below.

Actions advised

- Building on the good progress made to develop links with the local community, it is advised that practitioners prepare imagery with the children that represents the local community and its members. Visual representation of the local community could be regularly displayed in the environment for the children to visit, discuss and add to over time.
- Practitioners are advised to implement an emergent curriculum earlier in the pre-school year whereby the curriculum is planned from day to day and week to week in response to the practitioners' observations and reflections on the children's and/or practitioners' interests and needs.
- It is advised that practitioners promote multiple opportunities for open-ended art in the learning environment. It is important that the process involved in any art experience is valued more so than the final product. This supports children to understand their individuality and originality.
- The manager and practitioners are advised to develop links with the local primary schools with a view to ensuring continuity of children's experiences and progression in their learning. The 'Transitions' pillar in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* is a useful tool to influence and inform such practice.

- The use of the self-evaluation tools in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* is advised when reviewing practice in the setting. The breadth and depth of these tools would broaden the lens that practitioners use in their internal review processes, while also strengthening the action plans that are currently being used to inform improvements in the setting.
- Further to the steps taken to share information with parents, it is now advised that learning journals, containing the learning observations recorded by the practitioners, be sent home with the children on a regular basis. Furthermore, practitioners are also advised to encourage parents to contribute their views, knowledge and expertise to the observations that capture their children's learning and development.

THE QUALITY CONTINUUM FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTIONS
Very good progress indicates that appropriate action has been taken to address the action advised, and that the action has fully achieved or will achieve the required outcome.
Good progress indicates that appropriate action has been taken to address the action advised, and that substantial improvement has occurred, although further progress is necessary.
Partial progress indicates that some appropriate action has been taken to address the action advised, and some improvement has occurred, but considerable further progress is necessary.
No progress indicates that no action has been taken, and that the original action advised remains to be addressed.

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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

- Since the last inspection we have taken measures and implemented changes to support the children's learning and outcomes in our setting.
- We have worked hard and continually strive to improve and enhance the quality of our work and we are delighted to have this reflected in our recent report.
- We have a strong commitment to continuous quality improvement and we will endeavour to further support this as advised in our 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.**

- We are working on inviting more interaction with the community and have invited people from the community in to the service and we will build on this throughout the year.
- We have engaged in a more emergent curriculum which supports the children's interests as part of our continuous quality improvement.
- We have engaged in more open-ended art and have made it more accessible and readily available to the children so they can express their individuality and originality.
- We have engaged with the self-evaluation tools to enhance our quality and enrich the children's learning opportunities.
- Teachers from the local school have come to visit the children to discuss and share information and we have pictures of the local school displayed so the children can become familiar with it.
- We are working to engage the parent's contribution and knowledge towards the children's learning and will send home journals on a regular basis in order to give the parents an opportunity for feedback.