An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT

Service Name	Lisgoold Community Pre-School Company
Service Address	Lisgoold Community Centre Leamlara Lisgoold County Cork T56WT26
DCYA number	15CC0532

Date of Inspection: 05-03-2020

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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	05-03-2020
Inspection activities undertaken • Meeting with service manager • Meeting with practitioners • Meeting with board of directors (including parent representatives on the board) • Other	• Observation of interactions during a number of sessions • Interaction with children • Review of relevant documents • Feedback to service manager and practitioners

CONTEXT OF SERVICE

Lisgoold Pre-School is a rural, community-based early years centre. Three practitioners provide early years education and care for twenty-nine children during two morning sessions, five days a week. One of the practitioners is employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) for two of the mornings. The early years setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised of the 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 highly caring ethos prevails. The practitioners show sensitivity, they are friendly and welcoming and they create a warm atmosphere. A respectful, positive regard for the children and their families is clearly evident.
- A well-balanced daily routine is established, which consistently promotes the children's physical, social and emotional security, together with their learning and development. The range of activities provided for children could be extended. The daily routine plan is displayed in writing for the parents and in picture sequence for the children.
- The children are active agents in choosing and organising their learning and development activities.
- Snack time is utilised effectively as a social occasion and an opportunity to promote well-being and a healthy life-style. The children and practitioners sit together in a relaxed atmosphere, conducive to small group conversation.
- Transitions are announced ahead of time and the children engage eagerly in cleaning and tidying the play environment. They are very competent and self-reliant in taking care of their own personal care needs, as well as their play environments.
- Relationships between the practitioners and the children are responsive, respectful and reciprocal. The practitioners are role models worthy of imitation. They provide meaningful guidance and encouragement toward positive behaviour and they support the children to establish good habits for life. Problem-solving and conflict-resolution strategies are used effectively to support the children in becoming self-efficient in these areas.
- The children's sense of identity and belonging is nurtured very well. A broad range of opportunities is provided for the children to develop an appreciation of themselves as individuals and as members of groups. These include signing-in charts, a helper board, photos above the coat hooks, a birthday calendar, a family wall display and a friendship flower and hand-print tree.

Action advised

- The practitioners are advised to offer adult-initiated/led arts and craft activities as optional activities, parallel to free-play.

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.
- A very broad-based curriculum, informed by *Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* is documented and implemented to support the children's learning and development. It is evident, that the practitioners are knowledgeable about the development and implementation of an emergent curriculum.
- A broad variety of assessment approaches is used to gather information about the children's learning and development. These include a group learning journal, individual learning journals, checklists, learning stories, time-sample observations and photo displays. There is some potential to enhance these practices.
- High-quality interactions with the children are facilitated. The practitioners know the children well, they are completely involved in their play activities and use meaningful interaction strategies to extend the children's learning and development.
- The learning environments both indoors and outdoors are highly effective in providing a broad range of play-options. They are inviting and inspiring, purposefully structured and well-resourced to offer optimal play value. Outdoor play is weather dependent.
- Child-initiated/led, exploratory, active and interactive play is recognised and utilised as the main medium through which the children learn and develop. The practitioners are highly skilled in facilitating and extending play. This was evident in the lovely play episodes in the beauty-salon and as the children engaged in constructing a big play house with soft matting.
- The children's emergent language, literacy and numeracy skills are effectively supported through the interaction during free-play, utilising teachable moments when they arise and linking mathematical concepts and language, including Irish to everyday life experiences and situations. Interactive story exploration, songs, rhymes and games extend this learning further. The lovely range of experiments documented in the learning journals, the water and sand play, the junk-art work and the intense construction play help to build early positive dispositions towards science, engineering, the arts and mathematics.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to ensure that all observations are strength-based and mainly focussed on the children's interests, learning dispositions, attitudes, skills and knowledge. Learning outcomes need to be clearly stated in all documentation of children's learning, such as photo displays, the group learning journal and the individual learning journals.
- Practitioners are advised to organise full rain gear for the children and the practitioners, so that outdoor play can be enjoyed on a daily basis, regardless of the weather.

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 demonstrating great enjoyment in their activities. They are motivated and interested and they engage in a highly concentrated manner in their individual art work, farm and animal play and doll play. Equally other children are deeply involved in collaborative, interactive team work building dens and houses, doing sports with big soft blocks and balls or working in the beauty salon.
- The children are showing increasing confidence and co-ordination over their gross and fine motor skills. The active and interactive play in the hall supports this overall physical development through the whole-body active engagement in big construction or as they pull a blanket across the room with some children sitting on it. This helps to develop the children's core-muscles, upper body strength and arm, hands and finger muscles; these support the children's ability to learn.

- The children are developing a positive understanding of their own identity as members of families and groups as well as their local community and the different people within the community. This is very well supported by family and community members being actively involved in the work of the setting. On the day of the inspection a biologist visited the setting and carried out some experiments, and the day before a grand-mother provided story-telling. Each room has lovely local community displays, depicting places within the community and community helpers.
- Very rich use of language was observed throughout the day of the inspection. The children are skilled communicators and they use language effectively to express their views, ideas and feelings, negotiate play situations, solve problems and conflicts and reflect on their experiences.
- The children's voices are very visible within the setting. Their comments are recorded on their art work as well as in their learning journals, which the children are actively involved in creating.
- The children are well aware of the natural environment and its plants and features, through the rich, daily engagement with natural materials. Apple pips were recently planted and to the children's delight, they are sprouting. Lovely exploration of colours through free painting and sponging and enquiry-based play indoors and outside, using physical skills to manipulate objects and materials enables the children to make sense of their world.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is excellent.
- Effective strategies are in place for professional reflection. Monthly whole-team meetings are utilised to reflect and review the effectiveness of practice. The outcomes of these meetings are documented, so they can be shared, acted upon and reviewed. Brief, daily reflections are documented in the reflection book.
- The on-line *Aistear*, *Síolta Practice Guide* is used systematically to self-evaluate practice. All the self-evaluation audits have been completed, action plans have been established and the outcomes have been implemented.
- An ethos of professionalism, teamwork, collaboration and partnership is highly evident.
- The leaders provide a good role model for the staff and everybody promotes high standards and follows a clear vision and direction for the high quality work of the setting. All staff members demonstrate thoughtfulness and reflection in all aspects of their practice.
- A broad range of clear two-way channels of communication is established. Parents are kept very well informed about the work of the setting and family members are very actively involved and engaged in the work of the setting.
- Transitions into and from the setting are managed effectively and sensitively to ensure continuity of experiences and progression in learning.

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