A Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Early-Years Education-focused Inspection Report

Templemore Community Pre-school
09TN0005

Bank Street,
Templemore.
County Tipperary.

Date of Inspection: 8 November 2017

AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA | DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS
INSPECTORATE

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Templemore Community Pre-school is a community-based, part-time service that is located in Templemore, County Tipperary. It has been in operation for thirty-seven years. This service is part of the Templemore Community Services Centre and the pre-school staff work closely with the centre staff. The setting currently operates a morning session for children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. This service caters for children and families from a variety of cultural backgrounds with a number of children attending who speak English as an additional language. There were fourteen children and two practitioners present on the day of inspection.

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.
- Practitioners create a warm and welcoming atmosphere. On the day of inspection, practitioners were attentive to each child when arriving and departing; they greeted families/carers by name in a friendly manner.
- Relationships between practitioners and children are respectful and secure. Practitioners effectively model and encourage positive behaviour. They consistently encourage children's efforts and acknowledge their achievements.
- Practitioners organise a sequence of daily events that provides a flexible structure that is highly effective in supporting children's learning and development. Children are actively involved throughout the session.
- The snack time routine is a social event for children and it also promotes a healthy lifestyle.
- Some good examples of children's sense of identity and belonging being nurtured is evident. These included the individual labelled cubbies for children's belongings, and displays of a birthday chart, hurling flags and a friendship flower.
- Practitioners schedule outings to local places of interest on a regular basis, for example, to the local playground, fairy trail, church, fire station. This is a commendable way to develop children's awareness of the community in which they live.

Action advised

- Building on the current good practice around nurturing children's sense of identity and belonging, greater recognition of the children as individuals and as members of their families, is advised. For example, the purposeful use of photographs of children, their families, along with labels in the different languages used by children to reflect and celebrate diversity.

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.
- The broad-based curriculum, developed by practitioners and informed by the principles of *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*, is organised into medium and short-term plans.
- Practitioners effectively utilise a planning format that identifies the learning intentions for children while engaged in adult-initiated activities, routines and the learning environment. Plans are suitably flexible to respond to children's emerging interests.
- A variety of approaches is used to gather information to assess children's learning and development. For example, photographs of children's experiences, observational notes and collection of children's creations. Currently, there is some reflection of assessment information when planning.
- The bright, spacious indoor learning environment is arranged into distinct interest areas that provide very good options for children to engage in sustained playful learning activities.
- The outdoor learning environment offers children regular access to a challenging, natural space.

- Practitioners effectively optimise opportunities to engage children in their learning by participating in play with children and being attentive to their ideas. They skilfully support the development of children's language and thinking skills through the use of open-ended questioning.
- Emergent literacy and numeracy skills are scaffolded through the use of songs and stories and the effective promotion of a mark-making interest area.
- Ample opportunities are provided for children to achieve fulfilment, success and mastery during learning activities. The highly effective provision of open-ended play resources, such as plumbing pipes, encourages creative problem solving.

Action advised

- Practitioners are advised to consider the information gathered about children's learning and development tin planning for the next steps in their learning experiences. The resources in the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide* will support reflection and improvement.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is very good.
- Children demonstrate enjoyment and sustained engagement in their playful learning experiences.
- Children choose play resources and play partners, change and build on their play ideas, and plan activities according to their interests and needs. This high quality practice supports children to be self-reliant, persist in their learning, and builds self-esteem.
- Children experience success in their learning. Children were observed to express delight when a puzzle was completed and when engaged in action songs, for example, 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes', and the 'Popcorn' song.
- Children demonstrate a keen interest in books and stories. Children regularly expressed their creativity through role playing and problem solving with real play resources.
- Children are developing personal and social skills which enable them to respond appropriately to different situations which involve turn-taking and co-operation. Some good opportunities are available for children to take responsibility, such as, tidying up toys and personal care routines.
- Children engage, explore and experiment individually and in small groups to make sense of their world.

Action advised

- Building on practitioners' view of children as competent and confident, the practitioners are advised to allow children take extended responsibility throughout the routine. For example, encouraging children to take greater responsibility during the snack time routine is advised.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
- Practitioners work in partnership to maintain standards and enhance the quality of educational provision. Notably, they share responsibility to lead on the organisation of quality learning.
- The regular reflection on their practice and policies is aptly informed by *Síolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education.*
- There is a strong culture of continuous professional development amongst practitioners and board of management. Practitioners were supported by management to complete the 'Implementing the HighScope Approach' course. Board of management members have attended information events organised by local County Childcare Committee in order to stay informed about sector developments.
- An information handbook is shared with parents to inform them of the key policies and procedures that operate in the setting.
- There are effective formal and informal opportunities to share information with parents about children's experiences. Currently, the information gathered about children's learning experiences is compiled into a folder which is shared with parents at the end of the pre-school year.

- Transitions into the pre-school are managed very well. Information is gathered from parents about their children to ensure continuity and familiarity for them.
- Practitioners have established links with the local primary school to share information and to ensure progression in children's learning.

Action advised

- Building on the partnership approach with parents/carers, practitioners are advised to regularly share information about children's learning and development.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The capacity of the service to implement the actions advised above is very good as the board of management and practitioners demonstrate very good understanding of what is required to ensure ongoing improvement in the quality of provision for children's learning and development.

Summary of Overall Inspection Findings

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	**Very good**

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.

Published March 2017