Follow-Through Inspection

REPORT

Service name	Tir na nOg, Ballydesmond, Mallow, County Cork
Service address	Ballydesmond, Mallow, County Cork
DCYA number	09CC0124

Date of Inspection: 17th November 2017

AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA | DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Follow-Through Inspection

ORIGINAL INSPECTION DETAILS	FOLLOW THROUGH INSPECTION DETAILS
Type: Early-years Education-focused Inspection **Date of initial Inspection: 18 April 2016** **Report Published? Yes**	**Date of Inspection: 17 November 2017**

Follow-through inspection activities

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

- Meeting with owner/manager
- Interview with relevant practitioners
- Review of service documentation and records of children's learning and development
- Review of education resources and facilities
- Observation of interactions
- Interaction with children
- Management committee meeting

Action advised in original inspection report	Progress achieved to date on implementation of action advised
It is advised that the organisation and procedures within this early years setting be reviewed to create and nurture a more positive atmosphere which affirms and enables children in their learning.	**Partial Progress** The practitioners have adopted a more child-led approach. They now need to develop clear rules and boundaries for positive behaviour and establish good habits together with the children. Establishing and following a very clear daily routine will help in this regard. Exploring and implementing problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies will further aid this process.
The practitioners are advised to adopt a more responsive, respectful and reciprocal approach in their work with the children, moving away from a very didactic, directive, work-oriented adult–led style of interaction.	**Very Good Progress** The practitioners have adopted a very respectful, responsive and reciprocal approach in their interactions with the children. Very warm, caring, interactive relationships exist.
Practitioners are advised to ensure that routines and procedures consistently promote all areas of learning and development, such as physical, social, linguistic and emotional, not just academic learning.	**Partial Progress** The daily routine needs to be evaluated and adjusted to provide a clearer structure and security for the children. The routine needs to be displayed for the children in picture sequence so they can easily follow it autonomously. Transition times need to be consciously utilised, providing positive learning and development opportunities for the children.
Practitioners are advised to review assessment of children's learning and development to include a focus on observations which recognise and record children's learning achievements without ever testing children individually on letters and numbers in an academic manner.	**Very Good Progress** Strengths-based observations are documented in each child's learning folder, which is always available for the children and reviewed regularly by the families. Assessment focuses on children's interests, strengths, knowledge, values, needs and learning dispositions. Such assessment information forms the basis for the planning of the short-term curriculum.

It is advised that practitioners engage in regular planning for curriculum implementation which is organised on a long-term, medium term and short term basis and takes account of children's emerging interests.	**Very Good Progress** Utilising the 'Curriculum foundation' pillar of the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide*, the staff has developed a new curriculum statement. The 'mission statement' and ethos of the setting embody the long-term curriculum plan. The medium-term curriculum plan focuses on themes such as seasons, festivities, up-coming events. The weekly short-term plan is an emergent, enquiry-based curriculum plan, incorporating children's interests, ideas and dispositions. The short-term plan is effectively merged with the thematic medium-term plan.
It is advised that the practitioners move away from the didactic, teacher-led approach and expand their understanding of the importance of child-led free play with regard to children's overall learning and development.	**Very Good Progress** Child-initiated/led, exploratory, interactive free play is the main medium through which learning and development take place in this service. How to effectively co-construct knowledge with the children needs to be explored further.
Both environments indoor and outdoor would benefit from more varied, sense-rich, open-ended materials and resources to offer more opportunity for exploration, creativity, curiosity and multi-sensorial learning and development.	**Good Progress** The very richly resourced environments offer a broad variety of play options to stimulate and expand children's curiosity, creativity and sensory exploration. Practitioners need to keep expanding their knowledge about the meaningful use of the environments and their resources to optimise play value. The environments need to be kept well organised, clean, tidy and inviting.
It is advised that the programme of activities provided in the room is reviewed to allow children to have more agency, choice and freedom to explore and experiment in their environment and also to use their developing physical skills to manipulate objects and materials.	**Very Good Progress** The very interested, inquisitive and engaged children have agency, choice and freedom to explore and experiment in their environment. They have lots of opportunities to use their developing physical skills to manipulate objects and materials.
Children will benefit from a greater emphasis on the development of positive learning dispositions such as persistence and taking initiative.	**Very Good Progress** Positive leraning dispositions such as resourcefulness, resilience, presistence and taking initiative are very effectively fostered.
Practitioners are advised to provide and source some appropriate pre-literacy and numeracy experiences and activities that are fun, playful, meaningful and interesting, such as songs, rhymes, movement-games, finger games and stories.	**Very Good Progress** The very rich, enquiry-based curriculum provides a broad range of appropriate literacy and numaracy experiences and activities.
To support continuous development and improvement, it is advised that the setting reviews be informed to a greater extent by *Síolta* and the *Aistear, Síolta Practice Guide.*	**Very Good Progress** It is evident that the practitioners have engaged in depth with *Síolta* and the *Aistear, Siolta Practice Guide* and have adapted their daily practice, policies and procedures accordingly.
Practitioners are advised to adopt effective strategies need to support their professional reflection and for the mentoring, support and continuous professional development of all staff in the setting.	**Very Good Progress** Management has engaged Better Start to support the service with the reorganisation of their practice. The manager has participated in the LINC (Leadership for Inclusion in the early years) course. Effective strategies for regular professional reflection and continuous professional development for all staff members are in place.

Practitioners are advised to engage in regular, self-review and improvement practices which focus on children's learning and development.	**Very Good Progress** Regular reflection on and review of professional practice take place. The outcome of such review and reflection is documented and very evident in daily practice. Each practitioner keeps a daily reflective diary. Regular team meetings are held and agreed actions are recorded.
The management team and practitioners are advised to explore ways in which they can give recognition to the voice of the child and enable them to express their identities.	**Very Good Progress** Respect for, encouragement of, and recognition of the uniqueness of each individual child is very evident in the curriculum, the documentation, the displays and the interactions.
To build on the good relationship which has been established with the local school, it is advised that a greater emphasis is placed on sharing information about children's strengths, dispositions, interests and skills.	**Very Good Progress** Meaningful, strengths-based transition statements are provided for each child going to primary school.

Summary of findings

- The service has made commendable progress in developing and implementing a child-centered, age-appropriate approach to daily practice.
- The manager has developed her leadership role and is a very positive role model for the staff, promoting high standards for the work of the service.

Actions advised

- Practitioners need to keep working on their role as facilitators of play and co-constructors of knowledge.
- Practitioners are advised to establish a clearly structured daily routine and a minimum of comprehensive, meaningful and positive behaviour rules and boundaries.
- Practitioners are advised to further explore and implement problem-solving and conflict-resolution strategies.

The setting was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and actions advised in this report, and the response submitted on behalf of the setting can be found in the appendix of this report.

APPENDIX

SETTING RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE SETTING

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report.

At Tir na nOg we welcomed this visit from the DES. We had worked exceptionally hard since our last inspection. We had re-evaluated our working practice and had engaged with Better Start to help us to reflect and improve the learning outcomes for the children in our care. We were very happy with the outcome of the visit and we will endeavour to keep working towards receiving that excellent award on our next visit!

***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 looking at ensuring that the children know what is coming next which in turn may help to develop the clear rules and boundaries for positive behaviour.

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