An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

Early Years Education Inspection (EYEI)

Final Report

Setting name	Bishopstown Community Preschool
Setting address	Bishopstown House Murphy's Farm Bishopstown County Cork T12AHC0
TUSLA registration number	TU2015CC059
DCEDIY number	25CY0310
Date of inspection	22-04-2026
Date of issue of report	26-06-2026

What is an Early Years Education Inspection?

The Early Years Education Inspection model is used to provide evaluative information, advice and support in relation to the education of children aged birth to six years in early learning and care settings. The inspections will affirm good practice and provide advice to support internal quality development processes that optimise children's education experiences and outcomes.

How to read this report

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated and reported under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

- Quality of the context to support children's learning and development
- Quality of processes to support children's learning and development
- Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements
- 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.

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.

Early Years Education Inspection

Dates of inspection	22-04-2026

Activities conducted during the Inspection

- Pre-inspection meeting with the setting manager and an early years educator
- Review of setting documentation and records relating to the children's learning and development
- Review of the education resources and facilities
- Observations of interactions during an Early Childhood Care and Education Programme session
- Interaction with children
- Interaction with early years educators
- Feedback meeting with the setting manager and early years educators

Context of setting

The Bishopstown Community preschool is an urban, community-based early years setting and is now under the patronage of St. Anne's Day Nursery. Three early years educators provided early years care and education during the morning session for eleven children.

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 was excellent.
- There was a very warm and nurturing atmosphere in the room. The educators created a very caring ethos and followed an unhurried pedagogical approach.
- Practices were based around respectful engagement with the children and their families. The well implemented key person approach ensured that secure bonds between the educators and the children were established. It was very evident, that the educators knew the children and their families very well.
- The educators followed daily routines and procedures, which allowed choice and agency to the children over their engagement in activities and promoted the development of the children's skills, knowledge and learning dispositions in a very meaningful way.
- Mealtime was utilised effectively as a social occasion, where everybody helped to prepare the environments, enjoyed a relaxed mealtime atmosphere and helped to tidy up after the meal. Lovely chats developed while the educators sat and ate with the children, which supported language acquisition and development and the establishment of positive, healthy habits for life.
- Times of transitions were seamless and smooth, providing valuable learning and development opportunities for the children. The educators ensured that transition times were announce ahead of time and acted as role models to the children during tidy-up times. All the children engaged well in cleaning and tidying the learning environments.
- The educators were very calm and authentic in their interactions with the children. They demonstrated warmth and affection physically and emotionally through relationships that were responsive, reciprocal and respectful.
- The educators fostered caring and kind child-child relationships by providing a good role model and giving meaningful guidance towards positive behaviour.
- The rich, varied photographic representation of the children and their families around the room provided meaningful opportunities to the children to support their identity and belonging within the setting. Their art work was displayed in a respectful manner and a feeling wall display, featured the children displaying different facial expressions. Each child had a big box with their belongings stored in it, which they had creatively and uniquely decorated themselves.

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 was very good.
- The educators ensured that planning for the children's learning and development was built upon their interests and learning dispositions. An emergent, enquiry-based curriculum, linked to *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework was* documented and implemented. Photographs combined with a short narrative curriculum review were regularly shared with the families via electronic media channels.
- The information the educators documented about the children's learning, reflected their achievements and development with due regard for their individual interests, needs, approaches and backgrounds. Individual learning stories about each child, were shared with the families via electronic media on a regular basis. A beautiful group learning journal and several photograph books of the children engaged in different activities were freely available to the children on the book shelves.
- The educators became effective play partners during free flow play times. They engaged and motivated the children in a positive way and used a range of interaction strategies to co-construct knowledge with them. All interactions were affirming, reassuring and positive to extend the children's learning and development.
- The indoor environment was very bright, light-filled and inviting. It was well structured and meaningfully resourced to allow the children to engage in exploration and engage in child-initiated/led, active and interactive play throughout the session. While there was direct access from the indoor learning environment to the secure outdoor space, outdoor play was offered separate to indoor play, which didn't offer maximum agency and choice to the children to follow their own interests and learning dispositions. The play value of the outdoor area was low and water play was discouraged, as the children were not wearing water proof clothing.
- The children's language, literacy and numeracy skills were fostered very well throughout the session. They had a range of opportunities for mark making and free expression of their unique creativity during freely available art and craft work. A beautifully presented shadow play offered a lovely way for an interactive story exploration. Songs and rhymes were used at different times throughout the session.
- The setting adopted a very inclusive approach and the Access and Inclusion in the Early Years Model (AIM) was in place in the setting. The setting had also established helpful links with several external support agencies, such as occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and Enable Ireland, with a view to optimising support for the children.

Action advised

- The educators are advised to raise the play value of the outdoor learning environment significantly, offering a broad range of sense-rich, manipulative, open-ended, natural materials and resources. The children's learning and development would benefit from them having free access to this outdoor space during all play times. Organising and wearing of full rainproof clothing would enhance play experiences.

Area 3: Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements

- The quality of children's learning experiences and achievements was excellent.
- The children presented as very confident and competent learners and displayed many positive learning dispositions, such as independence, motivation, resilience and persistence. They were very much at ease and secure within the setting and showed ownership. They were very busily and comfortably engaged in play and exploration and showed curiosity and a sense of wonder.
- The children showed high levels of attention and concentration while decorating their flower pots and exploring the dry sand. Lots of lovely chats developed during these activities and information was shared.
- The children's personal and social skills were developing very well, which enabled them to play autonomously in pairs and small groups. They used their verbal and non-verbal communication skills very effectively to organise and negotiate play scenarios and build relationships.

- The children utilised the vast variety of opportunities provided to them to express their thinking, feeling and uniqueness. Some children spent a long time modelling and creating with play dough or making flowers on cards. Dressing up and pretend play were another way the children displayed their uniqueness and individuality.
- Outdoors offered some opportunities for the children to develop their physical fitness and their gross motor skills. Some children used the wheely toys and a swing or the see-saw, while others played catching games.

Area 4: Quality of management and leadership for learning

- The quality of management and leadership for learning was very good.
- The educators engaged in daily reflection and planning meetings to discuss practical matters and share relevant information about the children. Regular, systematic setting self-evaluation and reflection practices, coupled with in-house training were not strongly embedded yet.
- There was an ethos of teamwork, collaboration and partnership. The roles and responsibilities of every staff member were clear, and each staff member took a leadership role in promoting and supporting quality learning.
- The manager provided a very good role model for the staff and together with the educators, ensured high standards for the work of the setting.
- Management and staff members had engaged in a broad range of professional development opportunities. These included an introduction course to the new Aistear Framework, several courses on Autism, the Leadership for Inclusion in the early years (LINC) programme and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion course.
- The setting used various strategies to ensure that the families were kept informed and engaged with the work of the setting. These included daily informal chats, a parental handbook, parent-educator meetings once a year and the use of electronic media channels to exchange information.
- Transitions into and from the setting were managed very well and sensitively. Gradual, child-friendly settling-in procedures were in place. The setting used the Mo Scéal template to share relevant information with the primary schools, with the parents' consent.

Action advised

- Management and educators are advised to utilise staff meetings more in the context of systematic setting self-evaluation and in-house training. Collaborative work with the pillars of the on-line *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide, the Nurturing Skills Website* and the *Insights: Quality in the Early Years Education* webinar series is further advised.

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	Very good

Language used in Early Years Education Inspection Reports

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the setting using the language which is shown below.

Level	Description	Examples of descriptive terms
Excellent	**Provision that is excellent** is exemplary in meeting the needs of learners. This provision provides an example for other schools and settings of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Excellent; exemplary; outstanding; exceptionally high standard; with very significant strengths
Very good	**Provision that is very good** is very effective in meeting the needs of learners and is of a very high standard. There is potential to build on existing strengths to achieve an excellent standard.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful
Good	**Provision that is good** is effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to build on existing strengths in order to address the aspects to be developed and achieve a very good standard.	Good; of good quality; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; strengths outweigh the shortcomings; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist
Requires improvement to achieve a good standard	**Provision that requires improvement to achieve a good standard** is not sufficiently effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is good or better.	Fair; less than effective; less than sufficient; evident weaknesses that are impacting on learning; experiencing difficulty; shortcomings outweigh strengths; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard	**Provision that requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard** is not meeting the needs of learners. There is immediate need for significant action to address the areas of concern.	Weak; poor; ineffective; insufficient; unacceptable; experiencing significant difficulties; serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated; requiring significant change, development and improvement to be effective

The following resources can be used by ELC settings in their quality improvement:

Aistear Síolta Practice Guide

Aistear - Nurturing Skills website

Department of Education Insights – Quality in Early Years Education webinars

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.

We wish to advise, we have ordered full wet suits for natural outdoor play and have used the Aistear Siolta Practice Guide online in our team meetings.

Published June 2026/ Foilsithe Meitheamh 2026