An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

Follow-Through Inspection
Final Report

Setting name	Little Acorns Pre-school
Setting address	Moore Hall O'Moore Street Tullamore County Offaly R35V9K8
TUSLA registration number	TU2015OY010
DCEDIY number	09OY0011
Date of inspection	23-04-2026
Date of issue of report	26-06-2026

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; a response was not received from the setting.

ORIGINAL INSPECTION DETAILS	FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION DETAILS
Type: EYFT **Date of inspection: 23-04-2026** **Report published Yes**	**Date of Inspection: 23-04-2026**

Follow-through inspection activities

Activities conducted during the Inspection

- Pre-inspection meeting with the owner/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 one Early Childhood Care and Education Programme session
- Interaction with young children
- Interaction with early years educators
- Feedback meeting with an early years educator

Context of Setting

Little Acorns Pre-school is a privately-owned setting that was established in 2008. It is centrally located on O' Moore Street in the town of Tullamore. The setting offers a morning and an afternoon session to children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. On the day of the inspection, there were ten children and two educators present in the session inspected. One educator deputising for the owner/manager attended the post-inspection feedback meeting.

	Progress achieved to date on implementation of actions advised
Educators are advised to explore the *Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education*. In doing so, educators could further develop how they recognise and celebrate all children so that they have equal opportunities to engage with their home languages, cultures, traditions and beliefs. Further representations of the local community in both the learning programme and the physical environments would also be beneficial.	**Good progress** The educators had explored the *Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education* to support them in engaging with children's home languages, cultures, traditions and beliefs. A visual image on the door reflected the children's nationalities. Toys, books and dress up resources had been updated in the learning environment. The educators used songs, stories and music to further celebrate the diversities of the children. The children were provided with cultural food experiences through the visits of parents into the setting sharing their food traditions. The setting now informs parents of events happening in the local community and an image of local community roles were on display. Some children together with an educator enjoyed a role play game, dressing up in a *Garda* cap and engaging in *Garda* role play. A transition teddy was used effectively to connect home and school. This was very positive practice.
Action/s advised in Area 2 in the original inspection report	**Progress achieved to date on implementation of actions advised:**
Educators are advised to streamline assessment approaches ensuring they are purposeful and effective in informing the curriculum plans. Strengthening the links between assessment and curriculum plans would assist in developing a consistently	**Partial progress** The educators had noted they found the 'Planning and Assessment' pillar of the *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide* to be very helpful in developing their curriculum approach. The input of key educators into the planning and assessment processes had commenced. The curriculum planning processes included broad

emergent and inquiry-based curriculum. Advice is provided in the 'Planning and Assessment' pillar of the *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide.*	long, medium and short-term plans. Weekly short-term plans consisted of activities and experiences with some emphasis on children's group interests. A variety of assessment approaches were used to gather information about children's learning and development. These included narrative observations, individual learning journals and the use of photographs. Some assessment approaches continued to be repetitive and did not contribute meaningfully to informing the next steps in children's individual learning.
The educators are advised to further promote the children's early numeracy and mathematical skills in a practical, playful, and age-appropriate manner. Further guidance can be found in Department of Education's Insights materials entitled 'Numeracy and Mathematical Development in Early Years'.	**Very good progress** The educators used the guidance in the Department of Education's Insights materials entitled 'Numeracy and Mathematical Development in Early Years' to further promote the children's early numeracy and mathematical skills in a practical, playful, and age-appropriate manner. There were many examples of the intentional promotion of mathematical thinking and numeracy concepts with children on the day of the inspection. The children counted the number of children present and noted who was missing. They sang rhyming songs, discussed their ages, ice cream types and the number of Cheerios in their tuff tray. A height chart, sorting and matching games, peg boards, story books and visual imagery supported this area of learning further.
Action/s advised in Area 3 in the original inspection report	**Progress achieved to date on implementation of actions advised:**
Educators are advised to introduce small-group experiences, based on the children's interests, skills, dispositions and previous learning experiences. In doing so, educators could use these opportunities to further promote children's language and communication skills.	**Good progress** The educators had introduced small-group experiences, and the key person approach was used for the intentional promotion of children's language and communication skills. Word cards, songs, rhymes, open-ended conversations and positive language modelling supported this practice. The children were provided with choice of engagement for small group experiences.
During minor disagreements, educators are advised to promote the use of conflict resolution strategies with the children. The use of visual tools can also help in assisting children with the promotion of these social skills.	**Very good progress** The children engaged very well together showing positive co-operating and negotiating skills. The educators promoted the use of conflict resolution strategies and positive social skills with the children and no minor disagreements between children were evident on the day of the inspection. The use of meaningful visual images to further support this practice would be beneficial in the learning environment for children to engage with.
Action/s advised in Area 4 in the original inspection report	**Progress achieved to date on implementation of actions advised:**
The owner and educators are advised to equally distribute the roles and responsibilities when it comes to documenting children's learning and development. The contribution of all educators in this process will offer multiple perspectives and insights into what children are interested in, their skills, strengths and previous learning experiences.	**Very good progress** The owner had successfully delegated many roles and responsibilities to key educators, and this had benefitted the organisation process. The educators were clear on their roles and responsibilities and were regularly invited to provide their input on documenting children's learning and development.

The owner and educators are advised to build links with the local primary schools. This will greatly benefit and support a positive transition for children moving from the setting to primary school. Resources under *Mo Scéal* on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment website would assist in this regard.	**Very good progress** The educators at the setting had built links with the local primary schools and a local school principal had visited the setting. The educators now complete the *Mo Scéal* transitioning form from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment for children who were transitioning to primary school.

Summary of findings

Seven actions were advised in the original Early Years Education inspection report. Very good progress had been made in four of the actions advised and good progress had been made in two. Partial progress had been made in one of the actions advised.

Actions advised

- There is scope to extend the practices to further support diversity, equality and inclusion. This can be done by additional representation in the learning environment of children's home languages, together with family representation and local community landmark images. It is important that all visual images for children are meaningful for them.
- There is scope to further streamline the planning and assessing processes to ensure that children's individual interests, strengths, needs and dispositions inform the short-term planning. The educators are advised to seek the support of Better Start Quality Development Service in this regard. Further developing the role of key educators in planning and assessing for their key children would also be beneficial.
- It is advised that purposeful planned small-group experiences be considered to promote learning and be recorded in the daily routine.

Language used in Early Years Education Follow-through inspection reports

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

Level	Description
Very good progress	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	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	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	No progress indicates that no action has been taken, and that the original action advised remains to be addressed.

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

Aistear Siolta Practice Guide

Aistear - Nurturing Skills website

Department of Education Insights – Quality in Early Years Education webinars