

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

EARLY YEARS EDUCATION INSPECTION

REPORT FOR SETTING RESPONSE

Service Name	Pugwash Bay
Service Address	Lis Na Dara Carrickmacross Road Dundalk County Louth A91VR66
DCYA number	09LH0072

Date of Inspection: 11-12-2019

Date of Issue: 25-02-2020



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agus Scileanna
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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 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	11-12-2019
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction and discussion with the children • Review of relevant setting documentation • Review of records of the children's learning and development • Post-inspection feedback discussion with the setting owner, the manager and four early years practitioners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-inspection meeting with the setting owner and the setting manager • Conversations with early years practitioners • Observation of interactions and activities during three pre-school sessions • Review of educational resources and facilities 	

CONTEXT OF SERVICE

Pugwash Bay provides morning sessional pre-school programmes for children enrolled on the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. The programme is provided in three pre-school rooms. The setting also provides full day care, part-time care and after-school care for school-aged children. Five early years practitioners and twenty-eight children were present in the pre-school rooms on the day on the inspection. The owner and the manager were on-site and fully available for the duration of the inspection. The owner, the manager and the five early year's practitioners attended the post-inspection feedback discussions.

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.
- There is a commendably warm and welcoming atmosphere in the setting. The manager ensures that a highly operational open-door policy encourages parents to come right into the playrooms and spend time conversing and sharing information with the practitioners.
- The children have formed very secure relationships with the practitioners and seek them out for conversations, play and comfort. The practitioners are highly responsive to the children's needs. They know each child as an individual and they are very respectful of each child's personality and home culture.
- There is a consistent daily routine in place in all three pre-school rooms. Time is allocated for child-initiated play, adult-facilitated activities, outdoor play and snack.
- Transitions are clearly announced and happen in an unhurried manner.
- The practitioners offer very calm and consistent guidance for the children's behaviour.
- The children's developing sense of identity and belonging is notably well supported. There are many photographic displays of the children, their families, group activities and landmarks in the local community. The practitioners facilitate 'all about me' activities, engage in frequent conversation with the children about their families and their lives outside the setting. Parents and people in the local community visit the children often throughout the pre-school year.

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 setting implements a documented play-based curriculum which is aligned to *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*.
- The practitioners plan weekly for learning activities. The activities are based on broad themes that are developmentally appropriate and of interest to the children. The practitioners observe and

record the general content of the children's current and emerging interests. Sometimes this is used to plan activities for the whole group.

- Learning journals are maintained for each child. They contain photographs, work samples, anecdotal notes and learner story observations. These journals are detailed and are strengths focused. They present a rich picture of each child's individual achievements and learning journey.
- The indoor learning environments are attractive and provide for a wide range of play and learning activities. All pre-school rooms have some real, open-ended and natural materials and props in a number of the interest areas.
- The outdoor area is shared by the rooms and is used daily. It is in the process of being developed. It has a safety surface and some climbing and balancing equipment has recently been added. The continued development of this space will enrich the play and learning possibilities for the children.
- The practitioners, in all three rooms, interact calmly and positively with the children. They encourage them to play and explore, converse with them and play as a partners taking on roles given by the children.
- The children's early literacy and numeracy skills are effectively supported by the practitioners through play and playful interactions. On the day of the inspection, it was observed that there were very few open-ended and real props or resources to support the children's playful engagement in numeracy and literacy.
- The children are learning in an inclusive environment. The setting is linked with the Better Start Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) to access assessment and support for children with possible additional needs.

Actions advised

- The practitioners are advised to begin to consistently use their observations of the children's current and emerging interests to plan for learning, at both individual and whole-group levels.
- To further support the children's early literacy and numeracy skills, it is advised that real and open-ended resources and props be added to all three pre-school rooms. Items such as clocks, calculators, weighing scales, measuring tapes, shapes, wooden letters and number, alphabet cards, story sequence cards and real writing tools would be supportive of the children's learning.

AREA 3

QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is very good.
- The children demonstrate high levels of well-being. They are very well-settled in the setting and singing and laughter could be heard in all pre-school rooms.
- The children are developing very good friendships. During free-play, indoors and outdoors, they are choosing intentionally to play alone, in pairs in small groups and in groups facilitated by the practitioners.
- The children demonstrated a very strong sense of belonging in the setting. They know all the practitioners and the children in the other pre-school rooms. The pre-school rooms often join together for particular activities and events, such as practising for the Christmas show for parents.
- The children have many opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play and learning activities. It was observed that the structure of two separate periods of free play did not offer optimal support for the children to engage in their activities in an in-depth way.
- Most of the children engaged with motivation and focus when offered opportunities to use art and mark making materials. Many children displayed notable drive towards individual creativity in how they engaged in the craft activities. There is potential to further support the children's creative development.
- The children are developing good social skills as they engage in the pre-school programme. They are enjoying group games and many are learning to take turns and to follow rules.
- The children are achieving and developing, in line with their individual capacities.

Actions advised

- To further support the children to pursue their own in-depth investigations and learning, it is advised that the practitioners allow for a continuous period of at least one hour daily for child-initiated play and learning activities.

- It is advised that the children are given daily access to a wide range of art and mark-making materials and that they are supported to be imaginative, expressive and creative in how they use them.

AREA 4

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is very good.
- There is a highly professional ethos in the setting. The owner, the recently-appointed manager and the early years practitioners demonstrate a very notable shared commitment to providing a quality ECCE programme.
- There are very clear management structures in the setting. The setting manager is supported by the owner, a training and quality manager and an area manager. They meet regularly to reflect and review and to plan for quality improvement.
- A system of induction, supervision and appraisals is well established in the setting. The manager provides the practitioners with in-room practice support and mentoring.
- The three pre-school sessions observed were very well-organised and ran smoothly. The manager has engendered a strong sense of shared purpose and teamwork and the roles and responsibilities of the practitioners within the setting are very clear and equitable.
- The staff meets regularly to discuss operational issues and also to focus on the development of the curriculum.
- The staff demonstrates a respect for the children's opinions and thoughts in their day-to-day practice. There is potential to enhance how the voice of the child is respected, represented and included in decision making at a full-setting level.
- Information about the setting and the programme is shared with parents through a parent handbook, and open day, informal conversations and sharing the children's learning story observations in the pre-school room. The children's learner journals are presented to the parents at the end of the pre-school year.
- The setting has established links with local primary schools. Information is sometimes shared to support particular children's transition between the settings.

Actions advised

- It is advised that the practitioners further enhance how the voice of the child is included in the programme and how the children could be involved in full-setting decision making. Recording the children's comments and thoughts on their own work and their learning activities in their learner journals, beside their art work and on displays throughout the setting and supporting the children to share these with their parents would be beneficial as a starting point in progressing this action.
- To further support the children's transition to primary school, it is advised that the practitioners begin to explore using the 'Mo Scéal' learner profiles available at www.ncca.ie.

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	Very good
Quality of management and leadership for learning	Very good

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.

