

Reaching Out to Reggio

Expressive Arts for Early Years – Cairns Nursery, Kilmarnock

Project Evaluation

Using the guide below (Child at the Centre 2)

Level	Represents	Indicates
6	Excellent	outstanding or sector leading
5	Very Good	major strengths
4	Good	important strengths with areas for improvement
3	Adequate	strengths just outweigh weakness
2	Weak	important weaknesses
1	Unsatisfactory	major weakness

Key Area	Performance Indicator	Themes	Number of Indications for Levels							
			6	5	4	3	2	1		
1.0	Key Performance Outcomes									
1.1	Improvements in performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's progress Overall quality of children's achievement 	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.0	Impact on Children									
2.1	Children's experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which children are motivated and actively involved in their own learning 	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.0	Provision of Early Education									
5.1	Teaching for effective learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The learning climate and teaching approaches Staff-child interaction including children's engagement Clarity and purposefulness of dialogue Judgements made in the course of teaching 	4	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Meeting learning needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning opportunities, tasks, activities and resources Identification of learning needs 	4	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Expectations and promoting achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff expectations and use of praise Children's expectations and sense of achievement Promoting and sustaining an ethos of achievement Staff-child relationships 	4	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Equality and fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaches to inclusion Promoting equality and fairness Ensuring equality and fairness 	4	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
8.0	Resources									
6.2	Management and use of resources and space for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of resources and equipment Organisation and use of resources 	3	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
			3	6	-	-	-	-	-	-

Staff Quotes

Headings taken from - A Curriculum Framework For Children 3-5
Section 2 - Key Aspect of Children's Development and Learning

Emotional, Personal and Social Development

- "Help develop the children's self-esteem and self-confidence."
- "..a sense on being safe in the environment."
- "Allows a lot of opportunity to develop relationships and play co-operatively."
- "...expressing needs & feelings."
- "Allows shy/quiet children to express themselves through drama."

Communication and Language

- "The children's recall skills were excellent."
- "...help children speak up and focus on language."
- "Use language for a variety of purposes."
- "Having fun with language."
- "..having fun with stories."
- "Listening skills enhanced."
- "New language introduced."
- "...allowed the children to take part in short and more extended conversation."
- "Listen & respond to stories."

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- "Developing observation skills."
- "Asking questions why does that happen etc."
- "..try to solve the problems and bring their ideas to the drama."
- "..Helped develop the children's appreciation of the world and the things in it, animals, people etc."

Expressive and Aesthetic Development

- "They also were inspired to make some artwork after workshops."
- "..allowing children to move expressively and to make music by singing and clapping. Listen and respond to sounds, music, it also demonstrated that the children can use themselves to make pictures."
- "To move expressively...."
- "Expressing themselves through drawings, artwork etc."
- "The children can take their ideas and express them through different media."
- "Using verbal & non-verbal language."

Physical Development and Movement

- "Using bodies to express ideas & feeling in response to imaginative ideas."
- "Encourage the children to become aware of new ways to move."
- "..explore different ways in which they could move their bodies during role play."
- "They learned how to use their bodies in different ways."
- "It also encourage the children to move safely in the area."

Artists Comments

The initial meetings with the nursery gave a very positive start to the project. They were very helpful and keen to fully engage all the staff and children. The nursery has an excellent open plan space and a great outdoor play area with super resources and a great staff team.

There were five stories in total, three were chosen by the nursery staff. The choice of books were successful in being interesting and engaging for the children and provided a good stimuli for the lesson plans. The children were excited each week and retained lots of information from the stories between the sessions. Indeed, the level of concentration that the children had when the story was being told was excellent. The lesson plan structure was flexible enough to allow the children's responses to direct some of the work into different directions, whilst remaining within the themes. The children responded well to the movement and character work, particularly when supported by music. They stretched their imaginations and they grew in confidence each week. I particularly enjoyed working with the children because they were so accepting of the imaginary worlds we created each week and their use of vocabulary was good. I had a great response from one child with ASN. It was felt these activities drew him out of himself and captured his imagination.

The repetition of activity structure each week saw the children becoming excited in anticipation and enjoying the familiarity. I found the children were very keen to respond to questions and ideas. All staff from the nursery joined in each session and really supported the work that was being developed. They also discussed the project during their group time and some follow up art activities were done out with the sessions.

After the first week, I decided to change the space I was working in. The nursery accommodated this move and this improved the flow of the session.

Emma Young Replico

It is particularly encouraging to note the strength of staff evaluations against *Child at the Centre 2* performance indicators. There is a clear suggestion that the activities and structures of the project have measurable educational benefit and link extremely effectively with *A Curriculum Framework For Children 3-5*.

Furthermore, having presented ourselves with the additional challenge of exploring elements of the Reggio Approach, I am delighted that we managed to make significant progress in this respect without compromising the central project aims. The accompanying DVD offers concrete evidence of a robust mechanism for digital documentation, staff development and the scope for creative follow-up work.

I am particularly grateful to Emma Young, Liane Gallagher and the staff and children at Cairns nursery for their contributions to a highly successful project with such clear strategic value.

Joe Gallagher Cultural co-ordinator

CPD Evaluation Results

9 Participants

To what extent have these sessions helped your understanding of any of the following?

	Greatly	Moderately	Not at All
Vocal Technique	7	2	0
Stress and Intonation	7	2	
Working with text	6	4	
Character Physicality	7	3	
Creative use of props	6	4	

To what extent will an understanding of any of these techniques support 3-5 framework?

“Encourage the children to use language to be creative through verbal and non-verbal communication. Also encourage the children to look at a wider range of books.”

“I feel a better understanding of how the techniques help to stimulate the children and add to the literary experience. The techniques also help keep the children’s interest throughout the activities.

“To support and encourage the children to increase their literacy skills. To encourage the children to make a varied choice of books fiction and non-fiction.”

“Hopefully these skills will enhance the child’s understanding of words, stories and communication as a whole.”

“To encourage the children to be creative through different types of drama. To support the children in increasing and broadening their literacy skills through verbal and non-verbal role play”

“To support and encourage children to be creative and to access different types of books. Encourage creative skills in verbal and non-verbal role play.

“Use of vocals as an adult in a nursery setting is essential in grasping the attention of children and encouraging good listening. Without good listening it is difficult to achieve other outcomes from the 3-5 curriculum.

The work we did re character physicality and creative use of props clearly supports the expressive arts outcomes in the 3-5 curriculum.

Communication and language development is also obviously supported by the focus on books, the descriptive language encouraged etc.”

Please tick any of the following, which you think may be useful for future provision.

More Contexts (Fairy Tales, Myths & Legends)	7
More CPD sessions	2

Artists Comments

I really enjoyed the CPD sessions and felt that the staff participation level was high and they were committed to the learning and seemed to have fun. Programming the CPD before the children's sessions worked very well. The staff were fully informed, prepared and engaged in the workshops. I would highly recommend CPD attendance as a stipulation and forerunner to the workshops again.

Emma Young

The CPD sessions for early years staff have developed in strength, breadth and depth over the last three years. It seems clear that the key skills we can share as drama artists are those relating to vocal and physical expression. While staff are often well equipped in this respect the need and indeed the desire to stretch these skills was recognised. The exploration of creative possibilities when working with text has obvious benefits in any learning environment.

I personally very much enjoyed working with the staff at Cairns. The sessions were relaxed, enjoyable but focused. I am very grateful to Carole Harper and all the staff for such an enthusiastic response.

Joe Gallagher For Replico

Recommendations

Further roll-out

The challenge here will be securing the funding to make these activities available across the region. Creative Minds will continue to work closely with early education to explore every opportunity in this respect.

CPD

In the absence of region wide roll-out of the workshop sessions I would strongly recommend making the CPD sessions available to all early years staff.

Reggio

While we have made an encouraging start in exploring the possibilities of the Reggio Approach, further research and study visits should be undertaken and materials and activities developed accordingly.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Janie Allen and John Wilson for their continued support of this strategically important work.